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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MEUSER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 5, 2024.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL MEUSER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 9, 2024, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF SHIRLEY CHISHOLM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. KENNEDY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Shirley Chisholm as we mark the 100th anniversary of her birth, November 30, 1924, and as we commemorate her many achievements by posthumously awarding the Congressional Gold Medal.

The daughter of immigrants, Shirley Chisholm represents the American Dream realized. Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, she would go on to be a trailblazer, a catalyst for change, and an inspiration for generations after her.

In 1968, she would become the first Black woman elected to the United States Congress, and in 1971, was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus.

In 1972, she became the first Black woman to run for a major party's nomination for President. Before forever changing the national political landscape, Shirley Chisholm sought to change her neighborhood, jumping into local politics in the 1950s after receiving a bachelor's degree from Brooklyn College and a master's in childhood education from Columbia University.

Amid her community, she became an authority on issues concerning child welfare and was a staunch advocate for education reform. After being elected to serve in the New York State Assembly in 1964, she worked to expand food and nutrition programs for the poorest in her community and fought to provide disadvantaged students with educational opportunities.

She brought an unwavering commitment to justice, equality, and opportunity to Congress serving New York's 12th District for seven terms. It was here in these Halls and in this very Chamber that Shirley Chisholm advanced policies that provided healthy food options for mothers and children, expanded childcare, and strengthened healthcare coverage, and much, much more.

Shirley Chisholm's famous declaration during her historic Presidential bid, ''unbought and unbossed,'' continues to resonate as a call for courage, authenticity, and integrity in public service.

I am deeply honored to represent the district that serves as her final resting place at Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo, New York. It was in our community that she married her husband, the late Assemblyman Arthur Hardwick, Jr., and it is here that the two of them made their home following her retirement from Congress.

Her presence in our community is a powerful reminder of her enduring legacy. We are forever indebted to her for her service in advancing civil rights, women's rights, and making our Nation more equitable for all.

Yet, let us remember Shirley Chisholm not only for her achievements, but for the doors she opened and for others to follow. May she rest in peace and power.

REMEMBERING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS ALLEN GANG

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solemn remembrance of Private First Class Allen Gang, who passed away on November 10, 2024.

Born into a family with deep military roots, he entered the United States Army at the age of 19. He served in Vietnam in the 17th Calvary Regiment of the 199th Infantry Brigade where he sustained an injury while in combat in February of 1968.

Upon his return to the United States, Private First Class Gang married his beloved wife, Kitty. Together, they raised six children.

He received numerous awards honoring his dedication and valor displayed during his service, including the Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, as well as numerous badges and ribbons.

In June, I had the distinct privilege of presenting Private First Class Gang with his Purple Heart Medal, awarded to servicemembers who have been wounded or killed as a result of enemy action while serving in our military.

A lifetime member of the Disabled American Veterans and a member of the American Legion Post 721 in his beloved south Buffalo, he exemplified the enduring spirit of camaraderie and service. He leaves behind his wife, 6

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children, 15 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren.

With bravery and commitment, Allen Gang served this Nation contributing to the freedoms we enjoy today.

May he rest in peace.

SHOPPING SMALL BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the economic heartbeat of Iowa, our small businesses.

In Iowa, over 99 percent of businesses are small, many of which are family-owned. That is over 282,000 small businesses employing more than 616,000 people.

At a time of great economic uncertainty across the country, Iowa has been a beacon of hope and proven to be one of the best States to own and operate a business.

This past weekend, we celebrated Small Business Saturday encouraging folks to shop local for the holidays. As we approach Christmas and the New Year, I encourage Iowans and Americans everywhere to continue supporting small businesses and shopping local during this holiday season.

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and without them, we don't have large businesses and our Nation's economic engine would falter.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the vital contributions of small businesses in Iowa and across the country, and to continue advocating for their success.

RECOGNIZING IOWA REGIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR KAITLIN MAHONEY

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the first-ever Iowa Regional Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Kaitlin Mahoney. Mrs. Mahoney has taught at Bettendorf High School for 11 years, molding the minds of our future generations.

Mrs. Mahoney believes that education begins with the ability to engage students. She has worked vigorously to adapt the school algebra curriculum, enabling hundreds of students to move on to higher education. She also works as a student counselor, pushing students toward achievements previously unthinkable.

It is the creativity and passion of educators like Mrs. Mahoney that will push this Nation across the finish line of our educational goals. The fostering of our youth must be at the forefront of concern in this Nation if it is to remain the greatest country in the world.

She will be competing against other finalists for the title of the 2025 Iowa Educator of the Year, the winner of which will be announced later this year. I wish Mrs. Mahoney all the luck in the world.

MAINTAINING THE VALUES OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5349, the Crucial Communism Teaching Act.

This important bill directs the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation to develop a curriculum that teaches high school students about the dangers of communism and its conflict with the values of American democracy.

As communist nations continue ramping up their aggression toward the U.S., it is crucial that we educate the next generation on the stark realities of totalitarian regimes and human suffering caused by communism.

By providing students with these critical resources, we can help them understand the importance of liberty, individual rights, free markets, and the constitutional principles that define our Nation. This bill will prepare our young people to be responsible citizens who can safeguard the freedoms we hold dear.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5349 and ensure that future generations are educated on the lessons of history.

RECOGNIZING THE IOWA COMPUTER SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATION

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Iowa Computer Science Technology Association for helping Iowa rank amongst the top 10 States in the Nation for providing access to high-quality computer science education.

Iowa's top 10 ranking in the 2023–2024 academic year of computer science class availability beats the national average by 24 percent, with 84 percent of public schools offering computer science classes.

With computer and information technology jobs rising exponentially across the United States, the efforts of these passionate educators will be reflected in the success of Iowa's youth as they set the standard in the workforce.

As we move forward in the ever-changing technological climate, it is imperative that we continue to develop innovative ways of helping our students achieve success, not only on the national stage, but on the world stage, as well.

This is a win for the people of Iowa and for America. The fight for educational success is never over, and we must continue to prioritize education, continually aiming for a brighter future for our students.

HONORING THE 83RD ANNIVERSARY OF PEARL HARBOR

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as Saturday, December 7, will be the honoring and remembering of the 83rd anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, a day that will live in infamy, a day that claimed the lives of 2,403 American heroes.

On December 7, 1941, a peaceful Sunday morning was torn apart when Japan launched a surprise assault on our naval base in Hawaii. Ships were sunk, planes were destroyed, and lives were lost. Indeed, there is the USS Arizona Memorial that remains there today.

From this devastating attack, our Nation's strength and unity emerged. Pearl Harbor awakened an unshakable spirit of patriotism and resolve. Americans, ordinary men and women, answered the call to defend freedom and protect the ideals that make this country great and that continued democracy throughout the world.

Let us honor those who sacrificed everything and remember their courage and dedication. Their legacy lives on in the enduring strength of this Nation, which will never falter in the face of adversity and will always stand for freedom and justice.

FROM DETROIT TO BHOPAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB) for 5 minutes.

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, from Detroit to Bhopal, we have a right to breathe clean air. This week marks 40 years since the Bhopal chemicals disaster in India, and the survivors are still sick and waiting for justice.

Union Carbide, driven by corporate greed, caused one of the worst chemical disasters in history, poisoning the residents and communities.

I was honored to meet some of the survivors and proud to join them in their fight for justice. I joined Senator MERKLEY and Representative JAYAPAL to introduce a resolution reaffirming the need for stronger laws to prevent these tragedies and keep communities safe.

Many of our communities in Michigan's 12th District live in shadows of corporate polluters, so this fight is personal to me. We are tired of greedy corporations poisoning our communities and getting away with it.

In the Bhopal chemical disaster, around 20,000 people were killed when poison gas was released into the air. Nearly half a million people have suffered illnesses and premature death after the initial incident.

Of course, the U.S. refused to extradite the CEO of Union Carbide, the company that owned and ran the Bhopal facility, to face criminal charges.

We need and deserve a better world, not a world where the color of your skin, your income, or your neighborhood where you were born puts you at a higher risk of being exposed to pollution that causes disease and death.

We see it in places like Detroit and Dearborn's Southend communities where there are higher rates of cancer and asthma. We cannot tolerate a world where corporations take all of the profit and none of the liability.

Dow Chemical knowingly took responsibility for this disaster when it bought the company. Yet, they still refused to compensate the survivors. Dow was headquartered in Michigan, and if they think their actions are just going

to be lost in history, well, I am here to say they have got another thing coming. Dow must pay what is owed to the people of Bhopal.

MICHIGAN EDUCATION COMPLIANCE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, this is a plea on behalf 182,000 families who will have students with disabilities in Michigan. Year after year, we continue to fall short on the promise to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which many call IDEA.

Failing to help our students to obtain the services they need to learn is, again, years that we cannot get back for our children. With this shortfall, we continue to undermine our students with disabilities.

The education gap is continuing to widen. There is currently a 22 percent drop-out rate for students with disabilities in Michigan, where, for non-disabled students it is only 8 percent.

□ 1015

Schools use assessments to measure student proficiency and achievement, and under the IDEA, students with disabilities are expected to participate in State assessments.

However, every year between 2017 and 2022, the State of Michigan has requested the Department of Education to approve a waiver to increase the 1 percent gap required by the Federal Government for the number of students with disabilities who can take Michigan's alternative assessment. It is because we are at double.

We often don't do enough to support our kids who need to go through this, nor do we advise our parents properly. Budget cuts often shortchange individualized learning, plans that are crucial for students with disabilities.

However, according to the Autism Alliance of Michigan, the dropout rate for students with disabilities is double the amount. Disparities are even worse for students of color with disabilities.

We need to fully fund IDEA, and we know that will help Michigan serve our students. It will help reduce the amount of inappropriate assessments and improve access to information and support for our school districts.

It is disheartening to see the State of Michigan's Department of Education now before an administrative hearing judge because they are not in compliance with the Federal laws. This is the first time in 27 years that our U.S. Department of Education had to drag a State through an administrative hearing process. It is shameful that we are at this point after over a year of negotiations.

We have to do better. These are our children, and again, we cannot get these years back for them. We have to do right.

TRUMP TARIFFS WOULD BE DEVASTATING

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, Detroit is not only the most beautiful, Blackest city in the country, but it also houses the most important trade corridor in the Nation. Mr. Speaker, 27 percent of trade comes through our amazing city.

Tariffs are one tool, but they have costs and benefits that must be considered regarding trade. Used strategically, we know they can help new industries, support resilient supply chains, and even promote high-road labor as well as environmental practices.

However, the cost of Trump's tariffs proposal would be devastating for our families—take our auto industry, for instance. The U.S. relies on $97 billion worth of auto parts and millions of finished vehicles from Canada and Mexico, but Trump's tariffs, as it is now, would raise the price of new cars by $3,000. Our families cannot afford that cost.

What about our grocery costs? More than half of our fruits and vegetables come from Canada and Mexico. My residents are already struggling to cover the rising prices of groceries. Again, we cannot toy with our residents' ability to put food on the table or provide for their families.

JUST SAY NO TO GRANTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, most of the stories we read every day about outrageous government waste stems from a category of government funding called grants.

From the $3 million grant to study how hamsters fight each other to the $3.7 million in grants given to the Wuhan virology lab that likely unleashed COVID upon the world, these are the very essence of government waste.

Government grants fall into two major varieties: gifts of public money for every cause under the Sun and grants for local projects of every variety.

They are all for good causes. They go to universities, companies, NGOs, civic groups, charities, local governments, State governments, and do-gooders of every kind, all promising some public benefit.

Unfortunately, by their very nature, they are plagued with lax oversight, political favoritism, little followup, and questionable benefits. Indeed, much of the grant money doled out each year disappears into the salaries of various groups and agencies that will then write glowing reports of their work and apply for more grants next year in an ever-expanding litany of waste.

There is never a shortage of highly paid grant application writers eager to make that case.

''Personally, I liked the university,'' says Dan Akroyd's character in ''Ghostbusters.'' ''They gave us money and facilities. We didn't have to produce anything. You have never been out of college. You don't know what it is like out there. I have worked in the private sector. They expect results.''

If the Federal Government needs a particular good or service that it can't produce itself, it should send out a request for a proposal specifying what it needs and then award a contract to the lowest responsible bidder to provide it. Then, the contractor should be held accountable for delivering that good or service.

Another major class of grant recipients are local and State governments. Who can begrudge grants for law enforcement, wastewater treatment, transportation, homeless shelters, or schools? Yet, all of these grant programs beg a fundamental question: If a project exclusively benefits a local community, shouldn't it be paid for exclusively by that local community?

Why should the taxpayers in Pocatello be forced to pay for sidewalks in Poughkeepsie? Robbing St. Petersburg to pay Saint Paul turns our Federal Treasury into a grab bag for local pork projects that destroys the entire concept of New Federalism.

Local decisions and local money should be made and spent locally.

By definition, local grants are lower priority projects that simply can't make the cut when local governments are measuring their own local needs against their own local resources. They only make economic sense if somebody else can be stuck with the tab, and that is what grants do.

Money flows from politically powerless communities to politically powerful ones, often for frivolous projects that don't merit a place in local budgets. Because these Federal grants come with lots of strings attached, they are also inefficiently applied. But who cares since it is all free money?

A very simple test should be applied to this class of grants. If the project exclusively benefits a local community, that local community should pay for it. With that burden also comes the freedom to spend those dollars exactly as they are most needed. Federal resources should be reserved for projects that benefit the entire country. That is the difference between the Federal interstate highway system and a local street.

This is not a small matter. Between 2016 and 2020, Federal grant spending ballooned from $675 billion to $972 billion, and that is exclusive of Medicaid grants to States. That is nearly half of the annual Federal deficit right there.

Weeding them out or reforming them is no easy task because a thriving political ecosystem of wealth and favor supports them. In last year's spending spree, both parties indulged themselves with 8,222 congressional earmarks, a particular subset of grant spending where individual Congressmen handpick their recipients.

Here is a modest proposal for the DOGE boys: Stop the cash bonanza to every self-described deserving cause and influential community with a good grant writer. Budget writers and appropriators should look with extreme skepticism on every grant that awards

money without results or that robs taxpayers in one community to pay for projects in another.

It is time that we protected and reserved the Federal Treasury for the general welfare of the United States, as our Constitution envisioned.

CELEBRATING KAMBRIDGE ELDER AND COSI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise with a heart full of pride to celebrate a little magic from my district in Columbus, Ohio, a place where innovation, creativity, and community come together.

Today, that magic has an exciting connection to the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree. What is the magic? The magic is the bright young mind of Kambridge Elder and the incredible work of COSI, the Center of Science and Industry.

While I am here, I also want to encourage my colleagues to support the bipartisan National STEM Week Act because brighter futures don't happen by chance. They happen by choice.

Let's start with the tree. This year's Capitol Christmas tree traveled over 4,000 miles from the breathtaking forests of Alaska to Washington, D.C., making 14 stops along the way. One of those special stops was in my congressional district, where the tree picked up an ornament designed by Kambridge Elder, a seventh grader in my district at the Arts IMPACT Middle School.

Through a partnership with the Ohio Arts Council, COSI invited students from all 611 Ohio school districts to design ornaments inspired by the theme ''Building STEAM in Ohio.''

STEAM—science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics—isn't just a buzzword, Mr. Speaker. It is a foundation for progress.

Kambridge's ornament, a train with four carts representing each of the STEAM elements, was inspired by a train at her school that she loves. Her ornament isn't just a decoration. It is a vision. It is a symbol of what happens when we invest in our children and give them the tools to dream big.

Kambridge's story reminds us of the vital role institutions like COSI play in sparking curiosity, discovery, and innovation.

Under the bold leadership of Dr. Frederic Bertley, COSI has become a powerhouse of education and inspiration, earning its title as the Nation's number one science museum 4 years in a row with USA Today Readers' Choice Awards. Forbes calls COSI ''a beacon of scientific engagement,'' and that is exactly what it is.

From the COSI Science Festival to the wildly successful STEM Kit Program, COSI is making science accessible and exciting for families and kids—not just in Columbus, Mr. Speaker, but across the Nation.

Kambridge's creativity, fueled by COSI's mission, is proof of what is possible when we nurture curiosity and celebrate imagination.

That is why I am here to urge my colleagues to support the National STEM Week Act. This bipartisan bill, which I am a cosponsor of, will dedicate a week each year to highlighting the importance of STEM and STEAM education.

It is about bringing together Federal, State, and local governments with schools, families, and organizations like COSI to close the knowledge gap holding too many of our children back.

It is about giving every child, no matter their ZIP Code, a shot at a better future.

It is about ensuring America remains a global leader by fostering creativity and problem-solving skills that drive innovation.

It is about young people like Kambridge, who I hope is watching today, showing us what is possible when we invest in their potential.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the Capitol Christmas tree, let us remember that every ornament tells a story. Kambridge's ornament isn't just her story. It is ours.

Let us commit to building a future where every child can dream, create, and achieve, securing their future and the future of this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Kambridge Elder and her principal, her teachers, and her family for being a big support to her.

SMALL BUSINESSES UNDER SIEGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIFFANY). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, small businesses are the strength of our economy, employing half of all Americans and driving prosperity across our communities and our country. We all know that.

Yet, these businesses are continually put under siege by an avalanche of Federal regulations. The Biden administration has imposed $1.5 trillion in regulatory costs and 326 million hours of paperwork on small businesses. That is hard to believe, but it is true. That is time and money that entrepreneurs should be spending to grow their businesses and, of course, create jobs.

That is why I strongly support the Prove It Act, which we will be voting on today. This legislation forces Federal agencies to analyze the true costs of their regulations and consider the direct and indirect burdens on small businesses, which is so very important.

□ 1030

It allows small businesses to challenge unfair rules, ensures greater transparency, and even exempts entrepreneurs from regulations if agencies fail to comply with these requirements.

Small businesses should be able to focus on expanding operations, hiring workers, and serving their customers, not navigating the Federal Government's continuous red tape.

The Prove It Act will empower businessowners, protect jobs, and restore common sense to our regulatory process. Let's defend the American entrepreneurial spirit by passing the Prove It Act and unleashing the full potential of every small business throughout our country and certainly throughout my State, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

NATIONAL INFLUENZA VACCINATION WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Mrs. LEE CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LEE CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize National Influenza Vaccination Week and to emphasize the importance of protecting our communities through vaccination.

Each year, the flu affects between 9 million and 41 million Americans, leading to 12,000 to 52,000 deaths depending on the severity of the season.

In the 2022–2023 flu season alone, we saw approximately 360,000 hospitalizations and 21,000 deaths nationally.

In Houston, home to the world-renowned Texas Medical Center, our healthcare professionals are on the front lines during peak flu season, managing increased patient loads and saving lives.

The flu is not just a seasonal inconvenience. It is a serious health threat, particularly for children like my own, older adults, and those with chronic conditions.

Vaccination is our best defense. According to the CDC, getting a flu shot reduces the risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

I am highly concerned about the anti-vaccine messaging that is spread throughout social media and even on the news, and I am highly concerned that our next administration is selecting potential nominees for our most revered health agencies that have anti-vaccination messaging.

I would encourage all Americans to get vaccinated against the flu to help our vulnerable populations, including pregnant women and infants who cannot be vaccinated themselves. Each year, unfortunately, vaccination rates fall well short of recommended levels.

The National Influenza Vaccination Week serves as an important reminder that it is not too late to get vaccinated.

The flu season can last all the way through May, and every vaccination helps to protect not just the individual but also their family, friends, and neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Houstonians and Americans to do their part to prevent the spread of influenza and protect public health in the United States.

TEXAS LIBRARIES

Mrs. LEE CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss one of our national

treasures, and these are our libraries, especially at our schools.

Libraries are essential in addressing the achievement gap, and as a former first grade teacher, I know how important it is to all children. Libraries provide students with access to books, technology, and trained librarians who foster literacy and academic success.

Yet in Texas, we are seeing a troubling trend. Houston ISD, which is primarily in my district, has cut 28 librarian positions, and Spring Branch ISD has replaced certified librarians with less qualified staff.

Statewide, over one in five schools no longer has a full-time librarian. These cuts disproportionately affect underserved communities where students rely on libraries for resources they lack at home.

At the same time, Texas has approved a Bible-based curriculum for public schools. While this curriculum is optional, it does nothing to close the achievement gap.

Instead of focusing on ideological narratives, we should invest in proven solutions, like restoring librarian positions to provide equitable access to education and ensure all students can thrive.

Books, which could include the Bible, but many other books, are gateways to opportunity, and librarians are essential guides in that journey. Let's invest in real solutions to ensure every child has the tools to succeed.

HONORING THE FACULTY OF TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Mrs. LEE CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of several Texas Southern University faculty researchers in the 18th Congressional District and the great city of Houston.

Since the foundation of Texas Southern University, a historically Black college and university, it has remained a pillar to the Third Ward and the African-American community in Houston at large.

It is home to more than 1,400 outstanding faculty and staff members who each play a critical role in helping this historic institution shape and mold the future of America's finest students.

I would like to recognize a few of the contributions of these faculty researchers who have blazed a path in their respective fields of study: Dr. Robert Bullard, whom my mother, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, worked with closely, is the founding director of the Bullard Center for Environmental and Climate Justice. He is a distinguished professor of urban planning and environmental policy and is often referred to as the father of environmental justice.

He has addressed topics such as environmental racism, urban land use, housing, sustainability, climate justice, and community resilience in 18 books. Dr. Bullard has also helped garner the support of more than $70 million in external funding.

Dr. Howard Henderson is the founding director of the Center for Justice Research and a professor of justice administration in the Barbara Jordan-Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs. He serves as an advisory board member of the Vera Institute's Rural Jail Research Policy Network. Dr. Henderson is a member of the National Scientific Advisory Committee at the Institute of Justice Research and Development at Florida State University and is a member of the National Science Foundation's STEM Opportunities in Prison Settings workgroup. He has also secured over $2 million in research funding.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for these great leaders in research.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 1432. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the deductibility of charitable contributions to certain organizations for members of the Armed Forces.

H.R. 3821. An act to reauthorize the Firefighter Cancer Registry Act of 2018.

H.R. 5863. An act to provide tax relief with respect to certain Federal disasters.

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

S. 712. An act to identify and address barriers to coverage of remote physiologic devices under State Medicaid programs to improve maternal and child health outcomes for pregnant and postpartum women.

S. 3242. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to revise the shareholder threshold for registration under that Act for issuers that receive support through certain Federal universal service support mechanisms, and for other purposes.

S. 3738. An act to reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and for other purposes.

S. 4477. An act to reauthorize the Second Chance Act of 2007.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF JOE TANNER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of the former Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Joe Tanner, who sadly passed away on Sunday, November 24.

Mr. Tanner had an impressive career in the State government for 26 years, making him the longest serving commissioner of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

He was first appointed to the position of commissioner for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in 1972. Mr. Tanner served as commissioner until 1984 and completed a second term of service from 1990 to 1995.

Mr. Tanner accomplished many impressive achievements throughout his career. He was responsible for over 400 legislative efforts and consolidated 38 State agencies into the DNR.

Mr. Tanner was a dedicated servant to the environment and law, known for establishing a State single-point environmental permitting system.

Mr. Tanner will forever be remembered for his excellence and dedicated service to the State of Georgia. My heart and my thoughts go out to his family, friends, and all those who had the pleasure of working alongside him.

CONGRATULATING CASSANDRA CANNON

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Cassandra Cannon for her placement in Inc.'s 2024 Female Founders 250 list.

Since launching her luxury lingerie company, Lake, Ms. Cannon has expanded her company immensely, growing Lake's revenue by 50 percent, customer base by 185 percent, and roster of employees by 134 percent in 2023 alone.

Prior to launching the company, Cannon was preparing to begin medical school and her cofounder, Anne Read Lattimore, was working in the pharmaceutical industry.

The two realized there were improvements to be made in the women's sleepwear industry and decided to exit the medical field to launch Lake in 2014.

The company boasts a spectacular headquarters on West Harris Street, coupled with a design studio on Broughton Street in Savannah and fulfillment center in Pooler.

Congratulations to Ms. Cannon, Ms. Lattimore, and the dedicated employees of Lake on this stellar achievement. I look forward to watching this company flourish in years to come.

KIA 15-YEAR MANUFACTURING ANNIVERSARY IN GEORGIA

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kia on 15 years of manufacturing in the State of Georgia.

Boasting 2,200 expansive acres of land in West Point, Georgia, Kia's manufacturing plant is the first North American manufacturing site for the corporation, based in Seoul, South Korea.

After its groundbreaking ceremony in October of 2006, Kia has increased its capacity to produce 350,000 vehicles per year.

Soon Kia will complete its $217 million expansion to allow for the production of electric vehicles in addition to the plant's customary products.

I extend my most sincere thanks and congratulations to Kia and its Georgia team for their hard work and contributions to growing and strengthening American manufacturing.

Congratulations to Kia and its Georgia team on this significant milestone. I look forward to watching the company continue to provide jobs, opportunity, and top-notch products in Georgia for many years to come.

CONGRATULATING GEORGIA TECH

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Georgia Tech

for ranking number one among public schools in the South. This achievement was recently reported by The Wall Street Journal and deservedly reflects the university's impressive legacy.

Georgia Tech has retained its number one spot for industrial engineering and has recently achieved this top ranking for civil engineering.

Meanwhile, the university's aerospace, biomedical, computer, mechanical, and materials engineering programs all ranked in the top four among all universities nationwide.

Georgia Tech is a leader in advancing research and preparing students for careers in technology and innovation. This is an incredible achievement and a source of pride for Georgians everywhere.

Our public universities are great options for young people to get a quality education, and Georgia Tech embodies this to the fullest.

These well-deserved rankings highlight the commitment of students and staff alike to maintaining a culture of innovation and of excellence.

I congratulate the students, the staff, and the alumni of Georgia Tech.

WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS ARE AT RISK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. MANNING) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, as I rise today, women's basic reproductive freedoms are under relentless attack by rightwing politicians and judges across the country.

Over 2 years ago, Donald Trump's hand-picked MAGA Supreme Court Justices overturned Roe v. Wade, dismantling 50 years of judicial precedent.

This catastrophic decision has left one in three women living under outright abortion bans and unleashed a coordinated effort to undermine the full range of reproductive healthcare, including access to birth control.

In his concurring opinion in the Dobbs case, Justice Clarence Thomas explicitly called for revisiting the right to contraception. Despite the fact that over 90 percent of women rely on contraception at some point in their lives, extremist Republicans have seized on this as a rallying cry to target birth control.

In Oklahoma, Republican lawmakers have proposed radical legislation to outlaw widely used forms of contraception, including IUDs and the morning-after pill.

In States like Virginia, Arizona, Tennessee, and North Carolina, extremist Republicans have blocked efforts to protect access to contraception.

Adding to this alarming trend, Trump's Project 2025 blueprint outlines a dangerous agenda to further dismantle reproductive healthcare, including targeting emergency contraception and insurance coverage for birth control.

Despite his campaign claims of ignorance about Project 2025, Trump is now staffing his administration with the very architects of this extreme agenda.

I refuse to stand by and let these MAGA extremists interfere with women's private healthcare decisions. That is why I am fighting to pass my Right to Contraception Act to ensure every American has the right to access the full range of FDA-approved birth control.

This legislation is a safeguard against the growing threats to contraceptive rights. It ensures that every American can make crucial decisions about their health, their family planning, and their future.

The Right to Contraception Act guarantees the right to access contraceptive services and protects healthcare providers' ability to deliver them. It also secures access to the full range of contraceptive methods, including birth control pills, IUDs, and emergency contraceptives like Plan B.

In June, I was proud to announce a discharge petition to bring my bill to the House floor for a vote, and I invited my Republican colleagues who claim to support the right to contraception to join me in signing it. All these months later, not a single House Republican has signed that petition.

This comes after 195 House Republicans voted against the right to obtain birth control in the last Congress, and the legislation was blocked by Republicans in the Senate.

To quote award-winning poet and fellow North Carolinian Maya Angelou: ''When someone shows you who they are, believe them. . . . ''

Time and time again, extremist Republicans have shown us exactly who they are. Their attacks on reproductive rights didn't stop with Roe. In fact, they are just getting started.

In contrast, we Democrats believe that every American has the right to decide whether, when, and with whom to have children. No politician or judge should have the power to take that right away.

Republicans purport to believe in small government. Let them start by staying out of our bedrooms and our doctors' offices.

While I may soon be departing Congress because of the outrageous gerrymandering by the Republican-controlled legislature in North Carolina, let me be clear: I will never stop fighting for women to receive the basic reproductive healthcare they need and deserve.

□ 1045

WASHINGTON'S FISCAL INSANITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, when I come to this floor, I often speak about how our brightest days are yet to come, about the next generation of Americans, and about the future we should be working to build for them.

Currently, the Biden administration and Washington's embrace of fiscal insanity is a stumbling block to reaching that future. In November, America's national debt climbed to $36 trillion.

This is not normal. Washington, D.C., has a spending addiction, and it is just expected that Americans and future generations of Americans will pay for it. Our Nation, our children, our future grandchildren, and our future great-grandchildren cannot afford for us to continue kicking the can down the road.

Last year, the U.S. Census revealed that the median household income was nearly $80,000. Today, if everyone decided to pitch in and tackle our debt, every American household would need to contribute almost $273,000 to bring our balance to zero.

Compare that price tag to the average mortgage in the United States, which is about $245,000. Our national debt 4 years ago was nearly $28 trillion. Over the course of 1,400 days, the United States accumulated a debt of $68,352 per second.

No American family could survive that way. Yet, year after year, this is the way our Federal Government acts. This is not sustainable.

If any Member of this body had a loved one who was racking up debt at this rate, none of us would encourage them to mindlessly continue their spending habits. We would do what we could to help them evaluate their spending and get them back on the right track.

Yet, only about half of this body seems to care about how our Federal Government spends our tax dollars. Our fiscal house is in utter disaster, and we need to get serious and start finding solutions.

Since I was sworn into Congress, I have sounded the alarm on our national debt. I have opposed bloated spending packages that only focused on funding far-left wish lists. I fought to reduce and reprioritize our Federal spending. I have challenged this body to think about the blank checks we are writing and ask ourselves: Is there a way to do this more efficiently?

This petition has often been ignored while Washington sticks to business as normal and spends, spends, spends. Enough is enough. This is not fiscal responsibility. This is fiscal insanity.

On November 5, 2024, America made it clear that we no longer want business as usual in this town. It is time to get our fiscal house in order and to get our country back on track.

As America approaches its 250th birthday, President-elect Trump was spot-on in creating the Department of Government Efficiency as a perfect gift to our Nation and to the next generation of Americans.

Mr. President, hear me loud and clear: We will work with you to make our government work for the people again, to make it efficient again, and

to clean up our fiscal house. Let's work together to end the Federal Government's out-of-control spending once and for all.

This challenge is not going to be easy, but America is worth it. The future of our country is worth it. The next generation of Americans is worth it.

I know that we can do it. We are going to have to do it together, and our brightest days truly are yet to come.

UNITED STATES SUPPORT FOR AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of strengthening United States' relationships with Africa and the Caribbean.

The history and culture of the United States is inextricably linked to Africa and the Caribbean. The brutal history of colonialism, slavery, and the middle passage has shaped our shared destinies.

As people of African descent in the Americas and Africans on the continent, we commemorate all of our tragedies and triumphs of the last four centuries. We know that there is strength and comfort in celebrating our shared Black ancestry and identity.

These vital historic ties are an opportunity for the United States. As I travel in Africa and the Caribbean, I hear from many people, business leaders, and government leaders. They are actively seeking to partner with the United States. They specifically want to work with Americans to tackle global challenges that impact us all. Yet, Washington too often ignores or cannot hear these voices. We fail to invest the time, resources, and energy into building true partnerships.

We have entered a new era of global competition. Governments like those of China and Russia openly seek to be the partner of choice. There is a void, thanks to our neglect, that they are filling.

People in Africa and the Caribbean want to work with America as the partner of choice. If their partner of choice is not listening to them as sovereign countries, they will make decisions on their bilateral and multilateral alliances which exclude those countries which have all but ignored them.

America needs to step up our game if we want to build the true and deep partnerships that will advance our shared goals.

In these countries, respect, development assistance, trade, and investments go a long way. For example, in 2005, Hurricane Dennis devastated the Caribbean, causing billions of dollars in damage. I worked very hard to get a small amount of reconstruction assistance, which was $40 million, for Grenada. When I visited Grenada later, there were signs everywhere for the first time that read: Thank you, USA.

It is also important that Members of Congress get out and visit African and Caribbean countries. China shows up, believe me, every day in Africa and the Caribbean. Members of the United States Congress need to show up.

I remember once, when I visited Grenada just a couple of years ago, I stopped by the United States State Department Office there. I saw a picture on the wall of myself, the former chair of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, Congressman Eliot Engel, and several Members of Congress from a codel when we visited Grenada in 2007.

I asked if that codel had made an impact, and I was told, in fact, that 2007 was the last time there had been a congressional delegation to Grenada. That is outrageous.

I believe that this work can and should be bipartisan. Two decades ago, I worked with George Bush to designate June as the Caribbean American Heritage Month. Today, that commemoration is still celebrated among people in the Caribbean and Caribbean Americans here in the United States. It is a useful tool for building bridges with our Caribbean neighbors.

I am proud that, during my term leading the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, I have worked substantially to increase American investment and partnerships with Africa and the Caribbean.

As the chair of the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, I managed to increase the development assistance account by more than $800 million. We were able to invest that increase in important priorities, like Prosper America, to grow jobs and incomes in Africa and the United States; Power Africa, which seeks to connect 60 million Africans to reliable electricity; and the United States African Development Foundation, which invests directly in African entrepreneurship and the Young African Leaders Initiative, which seeks to lift up and strengthen the brightest flowers of African youth.

In the Caribbean, I created a program to invest in inclusive economic growth for the first time and worked with the State Department to expand our Caribbean diplomatic presence. One of our embassies in Barbados is responsible for seven countries. They don't even have a plane. They can't travel to those seven countries they are responsible for, so we are expanding our presence there.

We expanded support for small-island states coping with sea-level rise and invested in the Caribbean Base and Security Initiative to tackle transnational security challenges, like crime and drug trafficking.

Mr. Speaker, these investments are crucial, not only to support American security and interests, but to build an equitable and inclusive world which we seek.

I urge my colleagues to listen carefully to African and Caribbean voices. We have millions of people of African descent in our own country. We have to continue to build these bridges toward a shared just and prosperous future for all people.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY SAFETY STANDARDS ARE NOT OPTIONAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LOPEZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LOPEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that affects all of us deeply: the safety of our roads and the lives of those who travel on them.

Each year, preventable tragedies unfold on our highways. Families are shattered, lives are cut short, and dreams are lost. This is not because of chance, but because, somewhere along the way, safety standards were neglected, corners were cut, and human lives were undervalued.

This isn't just about statistics or regulations. It is about people: fathers, mothers, daughters, sons, friends, and neighbors. These are people who trust the system in place to protect them, such as the Federal highway safety standards, which exist for one purpose: to save lives.

These guidelines are not arbitrary. They are the result of decades of research, real-world testing, and collaboration among safety experts, engineers, and policymakers. We know what works to prevent accidents, protect construction zones, and keep our roads safe. Yet, in Colorado, time and time again, we see these safeguards disregarded, with devastating consequences.

Think about the mother driving home from her nightshift who never made it to her kids because her car was rear-ended in an improperly managed construction zone. Think about the newlyweds, full of hope and plans for the future, killed when a semi overturned due to inadequate lane shifts and insufficient traffic controls.

These are not just accidents. They are preventable failures to prioritize safety, to honor the trust of those who use our roads, and to follow the very standards designed to prevent these tragedies.

Federal highway safety standards are not optional. They are essential safeguards meant to ensure that every person who steps onto a highway has the best chance of getting to where they are going alive and uninjured. Cutting corners on these standards isn't just irresponsible, but it is unacceptable. Every poorly designed lane shift, every missing warning sign, every unfunded safety measure represents a choice to put cost or convenience above human life.

The Colorado Department of Transportation has a responsibility and a moral and professional duty to follow

these standards without compromise. This is not about bureaucracy. This is about humanity.

The failure to adhere to these safety guidelines is a failure to uphold the sacred trust we placed in them every time we step onto the highway. It is a failure to protect the workers in construction zones, who deserve to go home to their families at the end of the day. It is a failure to protect the people who rely on these roads for their livelihoods, their loved ones, and their lives.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot stand idly by as construction-zone fatalities in Colorado reach record highs. We know that CDOT receives over 40 percent of its funding from Federal programs. Yet, it continues to operate with a lack of transparency and accountability.

Legislators seeking answers to basic safety questions through CORA requests have faced roadblocks. Meanwhile, Colorado's construction-zone deaths have increased year after year, making 2024 the worst year since 2020. This points to a systemic failure not just within CDOT, but within the leadership overseeing transportation in our State.

This is not just a Colorado issue. It is a regional one. Colorado is part of the Department of Transportation region 8, which includes Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. If these issues persist in Colorado, how can we be certain they are not happening across the region? Competent leadership, from the regional director to the executive level, is critical to ensure that safety is not an afterthought, but a priority.

Federal oversight must demand adherence to safety standards and hold agencies accountable for every dollar spent and every life put at risk.

Today, I call on all lawmakers, transportation leaders, and community members to demand better and demand that Federal highway safety standards be followed to the letter. There is no excuse, no delay, and no corner worth cutting when lives are at stake. Every life matters, and every injury prevented is a victory for humanity.

Together, we can ensure that our roads are places of safety, not sorrow. We owe it to every driver, every worker, and every family to make this a reality. There is no need for loss of life on our highways because we know better and because we can do better.

SNAP REPLACEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. MCCLELLAN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the millions of Americans across the Nation who depend on SNAP benefits.

In recent months, reports of SNAP benefit theft has skyrocketed at an alarming rate, leaving many families hungry. In the city of Richmond, Virginia, alone, there has been about a 2,000 percent increase in SNAP theft over the last month. Food banks are stepping up to meet the need, but they are seeing record numbers of families relying on their services as we enter the holiday season.

Too many vulnerable families rely on SNAP to put food on the table. SNAP families often face precarious financial situations. When their benefits are stolen, they face the impossible choice of feeding their families or paying essential bills.

As the children go hungry, they struggle to learn in school.

This is not just an issue in our cities, but rural communities across the country are also facing SNAP benefit theft.

Congress has empowered the States to use Federal funds to replace stolen benefits, which has helped ease this suffering, but that authority will expire on December 20 without additional action.

That is why I am calling on House appropriators to extend this crucial authority through any funding bill that we pass and urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 205, the SNAP Theft Protection Act of 2023, introduced by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER).

Hardworking families deserve to approach the holiday season with hope, not the looming fear of food insecurity. We must act swiftly to ensure that vulnerable communities are not left behind.

□ 1100

WE ARE $35 TRILLION IN DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. MCCORMICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I will take the time to talk about the biggest threat to our Nation, our ability to thrive as a nation and an economy.

It is not really being addressed, even with the Herculean efforts of the DOGE and everybody else talking about what cuts we are going to make to the budget, which is around $7 trillion right now. We need to have a realistic conversation.

We are $35 trillion in debt. We bring in less than $5 trillion per year to pay those debts and to pay for the entire budget. If we didn't have a budget, if we spent nothing on the United States, if we spent nothing for the military, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, or anything in our budget, it would take us over 7 years to pay off our debt. That doesn't count the trillion dollars of interest we are paying right now per year.

Let's have a realistic conversation. This problem is bipartisan. The real divergence of the debt-to-GDP ratio started about 2004, so about 20 years ago. It happened when we had a Republican President, and it has continued regardless of who was in control of the Presidency—or the House or the Senate, for that matter.

If we talk about the future, 75 percent of the budget is nondiscretionary. Some people call it mandatory, but we are Congress. There is nothing mandatory about spending. If we don't address these issues, we are in trouble as a nation. If we are out of balance and our debt-to-GDP ratio becomes too extreme, our currency will fail, and we will no longer hold the position we have in the world as an economic powerhouse.

If you think that I am threatening Social Security, not at all. As a matter of fact, it is just the opposite. I want to secure it because, quite frankly, if we don't do something about Social Security, it will be insolvent in less than 10 years. It will take an automatic 21 percent cut without a vote.

We have no control over that, or we can, as Congress, say no we won't just print a whole bunch more money and saddle our children and grandchildren with that burden in the future and increase our debt ratio, again threatening our currency.

If you think I am here to threaten Medicare, you are greatly mistaken. If we do nothing, within about a decade, it will be cut automatically by 11 percent, or we will have to make the emergency standard to print more money and, again, saddle our future generations with debt they cannot pay, debt that will saddle our economy, saddle our ability to function as a government, debt that will disrupt everything we know in America to be good: our abilities, our opportunities, all the things that make us thrive as a nation.

As Coolidge famously said: The business of America is business. Business cannot thrive if we don't have American currency as the standard of the world.

Therefore, I want us to have those serious conversations. I want us not to have those automatic cuts. I want to make sure that we do what we can to cut as much of the deficit spending as possible.

Remember, a 30 percent deficit per year cannot be conquered just by one budget, but we have about 2 years to take this opportunity because, quite frankly, so many times I keep hearing my peers in this Congress talk about the things we need to give away. That comes at a cost, a cost to all Americans, and it doesn't matter if you are Republican or Democrat.

We have to have real reform in not just our discretionary budget, which is only 25 percent of what we discuss, but we have to have an entire budgetary process that is bipartisan so we can have a solution for all Americans going forward.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF THE HONORABLE MILDRED C. CRUMP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. MCIVER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCIVER. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to celebrate the life of Honorable

Mildred C. Crump, a visionary leader and trailblazer from my beloved city of Newark, New Jersey, who passed away this past Sunday, December 1, 2024.

Mildred was a woman of many firsts. Her wisdom, guidance, and unwavering belief in justice helped shape my life and career and transformed the lives of so many others. As the first African-American woman elected to the Newark City Council and as the council's first woman president, Mildred broke barriers and demonstrated a steadfast commitment to equity, justice, and community empowerment.

Her dedication to improving the lives of others, whether through her pioneering work as New Jersey's first African-American braille teacher or her tireless advocacy for housing, education, and civil rights, has left an everlasting mark on our city, State, and Nation.

Council President Crump was more than a role model. She was a relentless advocate and champion for people and a brilliant community strategist. She blazed a path for so many and was always a source of unwavering support.

For those of us who had the honor of learning from her, we are grateful for her. Mildred's leadership, compassion, and vision will be profoundly missed. All Newarkers mourn the loss of this exceptional woman.

I send my deepest condolences to her children, Larry and Sheri, the rest of her family, and her loved ones.

I know Mildred's legacy and impact will live on. It lives in me and many others.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mildred C. Crump on behalf of all the little Black and Brown girls she inspired and provided a light to shine. We will love her forever.

RECOGNIZING AUSTIN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, tonight is the beloved annual tradition of the National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, and I rise to recognize the Austin Area School District's contributions to this display.

The Austin Area School District in Potter County, Pennsylvania, is the smallest public school in Pennsylvania. The school serves approximately 180 prekindergarten through 12th grade students from the surrounding communities and excels in creating innovative, personalized one-on-one experiences for their students.

This year, the Austin Area School District was selected to decorate the Pennsylvania tree, which is part of the Pathway of Peace, a display of 58 smaller trees representing each State, territory, and the District of Columbia.

The National Park Foundation and the National Park Service annually present the National Christmas Tree lighting on the Ellipse at the White House and President's Park.

This celebration began in 1923 and brings together families, friends, and communities to celebrate the holidays in one of America's national parks.

With collaboration from the National Park Service, Department of Education, and National Park Foundation, local schools from each State decorate their trees with ornaments honoring their unique traditions and heritage.

When tasked with creating ornaments for the trees, students were asked: ''What makes your State beautiful?'' Pennsylvania is rich in history and natural beauty, and Potter County has a distinctive lifestyle.

Austin Area School District's art teacher, Mrs. Bethany Brown, and English teacher, Mrs. Megan Walck, had students create a list of what makes our region feel like home. Students considered Pennsylvania's outdoor activities like hunting, fishing, kayaking, camping, and stargazing, as well as historic events significant to Potter County.

This attraction is open December 7 through January 1, and visitors viewing the Pennsylvania tree will see that our students showcase many unique attributes of Potter County.

The ornaments highlight a variety of experiences unique to Pennsylvania, such as our number one industry, agriculture, and Potter County's rich history of potato farming. Local farms in Potter County supply potatoes nationwide. Maple syrup production thrives in our region thanks to the abundance of forests and maple trees. Each year, at the annual Maple Festival, the county celebrates the maple season with pancake breakfasts and open houses at maple producers' facilities. There are many more ornaments that showcase Pennsylvania's natural beauty.

The Pennsylvania Wilds region is a remarkable resource for those eager to explore Pennsylvania's natural wonders. Unique attractions like the Coudersport Ice Mine, which produces ice even during the summer heat, add to the area's charm and are reflected in the students' ornament designs.

Potter County serves as the source of major river systems, including the Allegheny River, which is also represented on the Pennsylvania State tree.

Visitors will see that students also incorporated our State tree, flower, and various native animals into their design. The ornaments made by the Austin Area School District students promote some of Potter County's and Pennsylvania's proudest attractions.

When reflecting on this experience, Austin Area School District student Breanna G. said: ''Having the opportunity to create a design that not only symbolizes me but my school and the area around me is so special. I feel so proud to have been given this chance, and I hope that someone will see this ornament and agree with the beauty of Pennsylvania's land. I am also thankful to my teacher, Mrs. Brown, for introducing us to this idea and letting us be as creative as we want. This is a project that I will remember for a very long time.''

Participation in the arts is wonderful for a young person's development. It can inspire confidence that often extends far beyond the classroom. Teachers like Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Walck nurture creativity and play a valuable role in shaping curious minds.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Austin Area School District students, staff, and faculty for bringing Pennsylvania's Christmas spirit to our Nation's Capital and highlighting what makes Potter County such a special place to live and visit.

Mr. Speaker, as Breanna G. so nicely quoted, it is an experience we will all remember for a very long time. I am incredibly proud of our students and their contributions to this cherished national tradition.

PAC MONEY IN POLITICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. KHANNA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the unholy alliance between soulless wealth and power that is stripping away Americans' freedom.

The reality is that, in 2024, 150 billionaires spent $1.9 billion on this election. Seventy-two percent of Americans—Republicans, Independents, and Democrats—are outraged with money in politics.

We did not fight the Revolution to be spectators in a game of billionaires putting ads on our television sets and mobile phones.

We have more dignity. We have more power as American citizens. Our Founders would be rolling over in their graves if they saw what has become of modern American democracy.

There was $2.7 billion of super-PAC spending—and let me tell you something, only 1 percent of Americans gave more than $200. Who has more than $200 to give to politicians? The money has become more important than votes.

Surely, we could agree in this body to ban super-PACs and overturn Citizens United. Short of that, surely we could agree with what Maine overwhelmingly did to restrict contributions to super-PACs. Why should it be that a politician can receive a contribution of only up to $3,300, but somehow super-PACs should be allowed to get millions of dollars?

We need to make sure, like in Maine, in every State that, at the very least, super-PACs are restricted so billionaires aren't buying our elections. I founded the No PAC Caucus in the United States Congress. We need to end PAC money, the lobbyist money that is corrupting the soul of our democracy.

□ 1115

We may not agree on every issue, but when you look at why politicians sold our jobs overseas, why Wall Street raided our manufacturers and hollowed out industry after industry to worship shareholder profits, then you have to look at the influence billionaires have had on our democracy.

Let's return power to our citizens. Let's ban super-PACs. Let's at least regulate billionaires from contributing to super-PACs. Let's ban Members from accepting PAC and lobbyist money. That will be worthy of our time in Congress.

HONORING MAYOR ED HONEA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. CISCOMANI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life and legacy of my friend, Marana Mayor Ed Honea, who passed away unexpectedly on November 22nd.

One of southern Arizona's most influential leaders, Ed was a pillar of his community who dedicated himself to serving the residents of Marana with steadfast resolve and a genuine passion.

A third-generation resident of Marana, Ed's roots ran deep in the community he served and loved so very much. Ed graduated from Marana High School and went on to serve his country during the Vietnam war as a member of the Navy and he was a lifetime member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5990 in Marana.

For Ed, politics was never an end to itself. He was deeply driven by his desire to make tangible improvements in his community. His career in public service spanned 37 years, across 3 terms on the town council, including serving as mayor since 2005. He was very committed to improving transportation infrastructure, strengthening public safety, and promoting economic growth in Marana and across the region.

He often reminded me and, quite frankly, everyone around him that he started calling me Congressman way before I even decided to go for this job.

I am deeply proud of the strong Federal-local partnership Ed and I built to benefit our constituents. In total, we worked together to preliminarily direct over $4 million in Federal funding in Marana.

However, it was more than just a mayor-Congressman relationship. To both of us, it was just two friends working together for our communities.

Ed's legacy of servant leadership will have a positive impact in his community long into the future.

Laura and I will continue to keep his family, friends, and loved ones in our thoughts and prayers.

As we remember Mayor Ed Honea, let us honor his memory by continuing the work he was so passionate about, building stronger communities and helping each other succeed. I will surely miss my friend.

ONSHORING AUTO AND STEEL MANUFACTURING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I hail from the manufacturing heart of automotive and truck USA, right at the Ohio-Michigan border. As this new year beckons, Congress must do what it can, as the old saying goes, to reconnect the U.S. head bone to its neck bone.

Specifically, as co-chair of the House Auto Caucus, this means we must reshore ownership here in the USA of the Chrysler Group and its key suppliers. What America makes and grows here in America makes and grows America.

The popular Jeep Wrangler, Ram truck, and the American steel that should go into them create two of the most popular purchased vehicles in our country and world. Just these two vehicles represent a major manufacturing sector for our heartland that was traded away by Wall Street to Europe.

As a result, thousands upon thousands of skilled workers at production platforms in Toledo, Ohio; Sterling Heights, Michigan; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, are now being idled before the holidays.

Why is it always right before the holidays?

Meanwhile, the purveyors of vast wealth actually harm the workers that create the very wealth that benefit those billionaires. The ownership of the production was moved to Europe, and their billionaire enablers and buddies on Wall Street from the world of high finance keep trading away their livelihoods.

America's truck, automobile, steel, and auto parts manufacturing workers have had enough. They deserve respect.

Wouldn't the holiday season be happier if Congress could reassure thousands and thousands of Jeep and Ram workers a better future?

The current Jeep Stellantis CEO, Carlos Tavares, is stepping down. He lives in Europe. After his dreadful 10 years as leader of this lodestar automobile company that was created in this country, he earns a whopping $43 million a year, not counting all his perks and stock options. He just got another million-dollar raise. After his dreadful—I can't even call it leadership—heading the company, he just got rewarded that additional million dollars. Meanwhile, workers in Toledo and Sterling Heights get pink-slipped and hit the unemployment lines. How cruel. This has to stop.

Production pauses were announced just before Thanksgiving as we head into the holiday season. That is downright un-American.

It is long overdue for America to be American again. Wall Street traders should bring back ownership of Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge to the United States of America. It is overdue to put real car builders in charge, not Wall Street traders nor hapless CEOs from another country.

The outgoing Biden administration and the incoming Trump administration must direct attention to what is occurring right at the Ohio-Michigan border. This region is the heart of the industrial Midwest, where people make and build our real wealth, not just trade it away.

Our people don't live in virtual reality or stock options. We live in places where iron sharpens iron—some might say the agony and the ecstasy of producing America's real wealth. Yet we have seen it traded away time and again, decade after decade as oligarchs and billionaires who could care less about America get richer off the sweat of our people.

This is a wake-up call for the current and future President of the United States. Hear our call. Reshore ownership of our Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge platform, both in the automotive and trucking industry. Lift up the industrial heartland of America.

As we reshore the ownership and production of our Nation's most popular vehicles, we also ensure that those who own the means of production have to live in the same reality as those who build these cars and trucks.

Both Presidents Trump and Biden have said America should stop the sale of U.S. Steel to Japanese Nippon Steel. I agree with that. Americans who are potential buyers wait in the wings. Engage them. Include those that forge quality steel that is a critical component of both our rugged Rams and Jeeps.

American steel in American cars, doesn't that sound good?

My hope for the USA is that we reclaim ownership of what we created in the first place. Our workers know it. They have surely earned it. The future of generations across our industrial heartland and Nation depends on America restoring America again. What America makes and builds makes and builds America. Bring Jeep and Ram back to the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING UNITED INFRASTRUCTURE GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, before I got into the political arena, I was in the family construction and development business. It was seldom that I ever heard of or witnessed a company that stayed in business for 20, 50, or 70 years, and especially not 100 years.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate United Infrastructure Group, a South Carolina company that has done just that. It has been a successful business

for 100 years, performing outstanding work in engineering, construction, alternative project delivery, and service.

United Infrastructure Group, or UIG, was founded in 1924 by Frederick Triplett as a partnership named Small and Triplett Construction Company. The company began construction of its first bridge in Morristown, Tennessee, then continued in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and the two Carolinas.

The company completed its first major bridge project in 1926 in Chester County, South Carolina, carrying SC–9 over the Catawba River to replace the existing ferry. For the next 20 years before his death, Frederick served as a pioneer in the bridge construction industry. His legacy continues in his two sons, Fred and Tom.

An innovator and inventor, Fred graduated from Clemson College in 1948 with a civil engineering degree and began working in his father's business. He was known for designing and building overhead gantry cranes used on bridge projects during the 1950s and the 1960s.

In 1976, he was named Employer of the Year for South Carolina for modifying a crane with hand controls to assist a disabled veteran and a former crane operator.

His other son, Tom, like his father, was respected by his contemporaries for his contributions to the construction industry and local, State, and Federal organizations, but one of his most memorable characteristics was being an avid American patriot. His legacy lives on with his son, Jim Triplett, who is an American patriot in his own right and is the current chief executive officer of the United Infrastructure Group, Inc.

Many in the industry regard Jim as a top professional in his field and one who has had a major impact on the highway industry in the Carolinas as a leader in bridge construction and design-build delivery for over 30 years. He began working for his father at age 9 in 1974. He received his bachelor of science in computer engineering from Clemson University in 1986. He practiced structural engineering with Ralph Whitehead & Associates until 1992, when he returned to work at United Contractors. In 1995, Jim acquired the majority interest of the company and later acquired several other former Triplett companies to unify the companies into a single entity.

The United Infrastructure Group prides itself on fostering growth and diversity in resources and disciplines by developing and motivating exceptional leaders in a Christian environment to achieve excellence by every standard of measure. Their commitment to not only producing excellent work but excellent people has left a lasting impact on South Carolina. The growth of their family business represents the heartbeat of the American Dream.

On behalf of the Fifth District of South Carolina, it is my most sincere pleasure to recognize the United Infrastructure Group for 100 years of outstanding service. The United Infrastructure Group and the Triplett family have set the gold standard, a century of dedicated service and commitment for which they will long be remembered. For that, I hope you will all join me in celebrating this momentous occasion.

TEN YEARS OF SPENDING DYSFUNCTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY. Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to stand before you today as I reflect on my one decade of service representing West Virginia's Second Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Over these 10 years, I have fought relentlessly to uphold the core conservative values that brought me to this Chamber, including securing our southern border, defending the Second Amendment, pro-life, and reining in the reckless spending of our tax dollars in Washington. Today, I want to focus on that last point, our government's unsustainable spending habits.

□ 1130

Mr. Speaker, spending comes in two primary categories: mandatory and discretionary. Mandatory spending, which includes programs like Medicare and Social Security, occurs automatically, and it accounts for two-thirds of our Federal budget. To change these programs, Congress must act deliberately.

On the other hand, discretionary spending must be approved annually by Congress and fund the vital operations of Federal agencies like the Department of Defense.

The most fundamental responsibility of this body is to fund our government in a responsible manner and on time to 12 single-subject appropriations bills. Let me emphasize that: responsibly and on time. It is called the power of the purse, which the Constitution of the United States of America specifically gives only to this Chamber, the U.S. House of Representatives.

It is designed to protect the separation of powers so the President and the administration doesn't just do whatever they want with out-of-control regulations. In my State it was a war on coal, a war on guns, and onerous regulations that go after farmers and the construction industry. By passing the discretionary appropriations bills like we are supposed to, we can rein that in and stop it. That is our job. We should not delegate that or give that up.

As I wrap up my 10th year here in Congress, let's take a hard look at how we have handled spending over that time. When I was sworn in, in January of 2015, the national debt stood at about $18 trillion. Today, it has doubled that and stands at $36 trillion. Worse still, the United States now spends more on interest for our debt than the entire annual defense budget which is $822 billion.

Frankly, this is an astonishing failure of the responsibility of Congress on both sides of the aisle. This out-of-control and growing debt is a failure to live up to the mandate we were elected to fulfill.

Congress has chosen to abandon the basic function of passing timely spending bills. We have an entire year to prepare, negotiate, debate, and pass these 12 bills, but too often we just don't do it. In my 10 years in Congress, on this chart in red, Congress has passed 34 temporary stopgap measures known as continuing resolutions. One is coming up next week because we did not do our work. By doing that, we surrender the power of the purse.

In the entire span of my service here in Congress, just two times, in 2 years, in 2017 and 2019, Congress passed the spending bills on time. In 2017, we passed only one. In 2019, we passed five. We saw a partial government shutdown because Democrats refused to help President Trump secure the border.

Each time we fail to pass spending bills on time, we kick the can down the road and leave the American people with bloated omnibus packages that are, frankly, an insult to the responsible budgeting that our Nation deserves.

When we do pass it, the game is the Senate Democrats essentially filibuster it, causing a government shutdown and trying to blame the House Republicans for it. This is political bullying. We need to stand up to this tactic. It is just not right.

The American people gave Republicans a resounding mandate for change. We have been entrusted with unified control of government, and that means one thing: cutting wasteful spending and doing our jobs on time. It is another travesty for Members of Congress to continue to vote for reckless, unsustainable spending when it is our children and our grandchildren who will bear the burden of this debt long after we are gone.

I was actually a Hill staffer here in 1994 in the Republican Revolution. In 1995, Newt Gingrich became Speaker of the House. We passed all 12 single-subject spending bills like we were supposed to. We actually did it. It has only been in the last 20 to 25 years in this country where we failed to do that. From George Washington and the founding of America until about 20 years ago, standard process was to actually pass our spending bills.

What we are doing now is weird. It is wrong. It is not normal at all. It is because of these bullying tactics from the Senate because they get what they want. If they shut down government and try to blame us and we cave in, they get everything they want: no border security, transsexual sex change operations in the military. They get everything they want if they try to

shut down government. We must stand up to this.

To the Members of the incoming 119th Congress, which I will no longer be a part of, it is time to control spending and reclaim that power of the purse before it is too late.

PRESSING ISSUES FOR AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESSES

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, we know that small businesses are really the cornerstone of the American economy. Entry-level jobs and the corner mom-and-pop stores are what really make a town, a small town, or a neighborhood work well. Yet, the regulations that are being heaped upon them make it just about impossible for them to go much further to remain in business. Year after year there are more costs, more paperwork, more things that just make it more enticing to retire or go out of business.

Federal regulations play a big part in that. In my home State of California, State regulations heaped upon them play a big role, as well. So what do we get? Some of the bad ideas that come out of California are emulated here.

We had a bill called AB5, also known as the ABC worker classification rules. What happens? That starts affecting what they call gig workers or people who are contractors but they are trying to corral them into being employees mainly so they can be unionized. That isn't it at all.

Then what happens? AB5 passes in California and messes things up for a while. They have to pass another law to straighten out some part of it including things like Uber rides and Lyft and things like that. They got an exemption for them. There are a lot of other people who have not gotten that exemption.

In D.C., in Congress, after watching that mess, after having something at least partially corrected that didn't work well, they wanted to emulate that with something called the PRO Act here last Congress. They want to keep on adding more and more to that burden.

What we see, again, in my home State of California is our resources board came up with more and more emissions rules on vehicles. We are not talking about being against clean air and having more efficient vehicles. That comes from the marketplace. It comes from technology advancing, as it can, instead of State mandates saying that we will just force you to electrify all vehicles by 2035 or 2040 or 2045 or whatever round number fits the narrative that day for a date and time.

We see that CARB is just choking off so much for small businesses and for trucking. Trucking is essential to get finished products to the store shelves and so much of the inputs to a farm or to a factory, for example.

A lot of times a ship will bring things into port. A train might move it a long way or the truck might move it directly to where it is needed in manufacturing or processing and then it is brought to your store shelves.

Well, those prices just keep going up because they force more and more mandates on trucks and on locomotives. The technology doesn't even exist or certainly hasn't been perfected yet on those diesel engines. Diesel does power the country, like it or not. It will do so for a long, long time.

The mandates that they place at CARB are making it so much more expensive. At some point we might have to go a few weeks without food and other issues, other supplies being on the shelves to finally get the point across that truckers can't do it anymore in my home State.

You see what farmers go through with trying to comply with water supply issues where more and more water is being pushed toward environmental water and less toward farming and growing food in my home State.

The San Joaquin Valley has been devastated over 2 years with the water being taken away and flushed out to the delta. It supposedly helped something called the delta smelt or so-called saltwater intrusion coming up to the bay and salting the water that gets farther inland.

They don't need nearly the amount of water that is wasted and is going through the delta and out to the ocean to take care of some of those problems.

Indeed, the municipalities around the delta need to look at how much effluent they are putting into the delta, into that estuary, or into the ocean directly by not having cleaned up their act with the effluent coming out of the sewer treatment plant, sometimes just straight sewer. The regulations are needed on the city folks and not on the farmers and not taking away the water.

What I am talking about is that these small businesses like farms, like downtown, like trucking companies, like all that are being devastated by regulations. A lot of them start in my home State of California but then are emulated here in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, so often it seems that one hasn't even talked to the other about how the rules would be effective, how they would actually be devastating, or how they would be implemented in a way that isn't hurtful.

Government is supposed to help the people. Government is supposed to help people whether they are the ones being protected by these so-called polluters or the ones who need to receive the products that they are making. Business is a big part of that.

If we don't allow these people to be in business, then those jobs will be exported. We will import everything from China at lower quality. We need relief from that at the Federal level, as well as the State level, from this regulatory overreach.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 39 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

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

Creator God, You have privileged us with the mandate to sow seeds of peace and love, justice and mercy. You, who are the source of all life, have entrusted us with the care for one another in the time we share together on this great Earth.

On these men and women in these Chambers You have laid the mantle of governance and leadership, calling on them to be wise in the sowing of wisdom, careful in the establishment of laws, discerning when making choices which will direct the future of our Nation.

As they bear the concerns of their constituents, give them both clarity and conscientiousness. May they aim for civility and not division.

May all of us who gather in this place who labor for both the welfare of our country and the common good of its citizens reap the joy of our labors and the fruit of our faithfulness as we each seek to be good stewards of Your generous bounty.

With the guidance of Your spirit to lead us this day, we offer our prayer in Your sovereign name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. PLASKETT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

RECOGNIZING YOUNG ATHLETES

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

Mr. TIFFANY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize all the young athletes from Wisconsin's Seventh District who competed in the 2024 Wisconsin football State championships.

I congratulate the Owen-Withee Blackhawks on winning the program's first-ever State championship, the Edgar Wildcats and Coach Jerry Sinz on winning the Division 7 State championship title for the second year in a row, and the Stratford Tigers on winning the Division 5 State championship title for the third year in a row, setting a WIAA State record with their 10th State football title in school history.

I also wish Stratford's head coach, Jason Tubbs, all the best in retirement after 13 seasons with the Tigers.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate all of these athletes and their coaches on an incredible season.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge International Day of Persons with Disabilities, which is observed annually on December 3.

Mr. Speaker, 1 in 4, approximately 70 million, adults in the United States report having a disability. In the Virgin Islands, my home, approximately 10,000 people report having a disability.

Despite significant progress within the disability rights movement, in December 2022, 40 percent of adults with disabilities reported experiencing unfair treatment and discrimination.

As elected officials and legislators, we have a special responsibility to advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities. We must pass legislation that supports their right to affordable, accessible, and quality housing; educational opportunities; healthcare; technology services; transportation; and rights of work.

We must continuously champion policies that improve and make the world a more equitable place for all Americans.

Today and every day, I remain dedicated to creating a barrier-free world that values the diversity and uniqueness of each individual.

RECOGNIZING IMPORTANCE OF CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the importance of our Nation's correctional officers.

The correctional officers at the Bureau of Prisons facilities across my district and nationwide are the backbone of our correctional systems. These dedicated professionals work tirelessly and are critical to maintaining safety and security within our Federal correctional facilities and detention centers.

Unfortunately, the Bureau of Prisons has faced unprecedented challenges in recruiting and retaining correctional staff. Multiple BOP facilities in Pennsylvania's 15th Congressional District are understaffed by at least 20 percent of their authorized levels.

Under current law, these essential workers may not receive pay during a government shutdown. Uncertainty over when the next paycheck will arrive should not exacerbate the staffing shortages and difficult conditions of working in a prison environment.

Yesterday, I introduced the Keep our Correctional Officers Paid Act, which would guarantee that correctional officers who are required to show up to work every day of the year continue to receive a paycheck in the event of a government shutdown.

Mr. Speaker, this crucial legislation recognizes the unwavering, dedicated work of correction officers in ensuring public safety and provides the Bureau of Prisons' staff with certainty. I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

RECOGNIZING AARON POINTER

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

Ms. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of Aaron Pointer, who is retiring from the Metro Parks Tacoma board after more than 20 years of service.

During his career in professional sports and public service, Aaron has broken records and barriers and expanded recreation opportunities in Pierce County.

While growing up in Oakland, California, Aaron was passionate about all sports and played basketball and baseball at the University of San Francisco.

In 1961, he signed a contract with the Houston Colt .45s, which is today known as the Astros. Aaron was often the only Black player on the team and faced prejudice and discrimination, including being forced to eat, travel, and stay in lodging separate from his White teammates.

Despite this, Aaron broke records on the field and became the last pro baseball player to hit over .400.

After retiring as a player, Aaron continued his exceptional career in sports through officiating football. He was the first Black official in the Pac-10 Conference, and in 1978, he became an NFL referee, where he officiated for 17 years.

He empowered the next generation of athletes with Pierce County Parks, where he supervised sports leagues and athletics for young people. He has also been a longtime member of the Tacoma Pierce County Black Collective, working for more equitable education, healthcare, and economic opportunity for the Black community.

I am so proud to recognize Aaron for his impactful career at the highest levels of professional sports, and I thank him for his years of service to our community.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S SEVERE, REPEATED AUDIT FAILURES ARE EMBARRASSING

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the Biden-Harris Education Department has once again failed America's hardworking taxpayers.

For 3 years in a row, the Education Department failed its audit. In other words, the Education Department has been unable to manage effectively, efficiently, or with any sense of accuracy the resources entrusted to it.

Accuracy, transparency, and consistency are critical when it comes to managing finances. The Education Department has taken a different approach. Its student loan data was full of errors, and it made up estimates it could not defend to its auditor.

Bungling and bad budgeting appear to be the Education Department's blueprint. I can't tell if this is due to general ineptness or deliberate wasteful spending of taxpayer dollars, but I can tell you it is an embarrassment. The American people deserve better.

THANKING REPRESENTATIVE DEBBIE LESKO

(Mrs. RODGERS of Washington asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank and celebrate the leadership and commitment of my good friend, Congresswoman DEBBIE LESKO from the great State of Arizona, for her 16 years of public service in the Arizona House of Representatives, the Arizona Senate, and now the United States House of Representatives.

As chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, I have witnessed Congresswoman DEBBIE LESKO as a fierce advocate for her district and a real ally in advocating for American technological and energy leadership. She has also served as our Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee vice chair.

Her spirit and determination have made our committee and the House of Representatives as a whole a better place.

I look forward to seeing Congresswoman LESKO succeed in her new role, and I know she will bring that same

spirit and determination to the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors.

□ 1215

RECOGNIZING JUSTIN CAMP

(Mrs. LESKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a member of my staff, Justin Camp, for his dedication and service to myself and the constituents of Arizona's Eighth Congressional District.

A native of California, Justin joined my staff as a legislative correspondent and worked his way up to becoming a legislative assistant. Justin is a committed team member who has the important job of communicating our work to our constituents and overseeing a legislative portfolio that includes education and social issues.

I thank Justin for his hard work and dedication to me, our team, and the constituents in Arizona.

As I leave Congress, I have no doubt Justin will go on to do great things as he continues his public service. I wish him nothing but the best in all of his future endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate Justin.

UNFAIR TAXES

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Senate finally passed the Federal Disaster Tax Relief Act which includes in that my own bill to stop taxing wildfire survivors after they received damages and after everything has been burned out in Paradise, California, and several other northern California fires in recent years.

The IRS has treated disaster relief like a payday for themselves, taking from the survivors who have already lost so much. Now that ends.

This bill ensures wildfire victims will keep their settlement funds, money they need to rebuild their own lives. It also stops the unfair taxes on legal fees. Get this, Mr. Speaker, they have to pay the taxes on the fees that the attorneys would get when they cut their 30, 33 percent out of those award damages. It also restores their lost wages, taxes, and other recovery costs.

Taxpayers can claim refunds for taxes wrongly paid since 2020, putting over $500 million back where it belongs: with the people.

This isn't just dollars and cents. It is about doing what is right for those facing disaster.

After years of work, I am really glad to see this legislation can finally clear both Houses of Congress and get these folks the relief they have needed for so long after nearly being disaster victims of wildfire.

KEEP COMMUNISM OUT OF OUR SCHOOLS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, there are over 500 schools in the United States that are subverted with Chinese Communist Party propaganda. The endorsement of communism in American classrooms has led to a disgusting 28 percent of young adults who have a favorable opinion of communism, and another 19 percent believe that a dictatorship is the best political system.

American families must stand up against Communist atrocities and support democracy, which is why this week House Republicans will consider the Crucial Communism Teaching Act, introduced by the courageous Congresswoman MARIA ELVIRA SALAZAR. This bill will provide truthful curriculum to students about the failures of communism and totalitarianism.

House Republicans, led by Speaker MIKE JOHNSON, will safeguard democracy and not allow communist infiltration.

In conclusion, God bless our troops as the global war on terrorism continues. Open borders for dictators put all Americans at risk of more 9/11 attacks imminent, as warned by the FBI. Trump will reinstate existing laws to protect American families with peace through strength.

DISASTER TAX PACKAGE

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

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Speaker, I share Representative LAMALFA's appreciation that last night the Senate finally unanimously passed the bipartisan Federal Disaster Tax Relief Act, sending it to the President's desk.

This bill includes language that I introduced over a year ago to help Maui fire victims deduct their disaster-related losses and keep money in their pockets. This bill will also exempt wildfire disaster settlement payments from being taxed.

As Maui and other fire-impacted communities across the country focus on their recoveries, they deserve certainty that the financial relief they receive will go entirely to them and to their ''family,'' ''ohana.''

For months, this bill and the financial relief it provides to our Maui ''family,'' ''ohana,'' have been among my top priorities in Congress. I am proud to have been part of a majority in the House in signing a discharge petition, forcing a vote on this bill, and passing it overwhelmingly back in May, where it has remained with the Senate.

I am grateful to have been part of this bipartisan effort with my friends: Congressmen GREG STEUBE, DOUG LAMALFA, and MIKE THOMPSON. While this has been a long journey together, I am proud we have gotten this over the finish line, and I hope President Biden will sign this bill into law as soon as possible.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF KIRK SCHURING

(Mr. RULLI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RULLI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today before you to shine light on the recent passing of my dear friend, mentor, and colleague, Kirk Schuring, a true giant amongst men and known around the State as the legislators' legislator.

He passed away on November 22, 2024, following a courageous battle with cancer.

Kirk Schuring was my mentor. He was the finest thing that ever came from Ohio. Being green, getting into the Ohio Senate, he mentored me as the chair of small business, and then I became chair for 4 years of government. When I was chair, he taught me how to really do policy. He also told me that every voice in Ohio must have a voice.

He was proud of doing hard work in policy and doing amendments so all Ohioans could be represented. That was his point of focus, to do policy work, the hard, heavy lifting that most people will never see.

Some of his accomplishments were he allocated $7 million for the jumpstart of the expansion of the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. He was instrumental in getting $50 million from the brand-new movie of ''Superman'' that was filmed in Cleveland, Ohio.

He was an advocate of the Canton Urban League, the Stark County Young Republicans, the Canton Jaycees, and a lot more than that.

Kirk Schuring will be missed. He was a dear friend, and Ohio is better that he existed.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for this opportunity to speak about my mentor.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. THOMAS CORK, SR.

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

Mr. MCGARVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life, legacy, and service of Mr. Thomas Cork, Sr., a United States Marine Corps veteran from my hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, who recently passed away at 95 years old.

In 1948, Thomas Cork left Louisville to serve our country as a Montford Point marine, making history as part of the first group of Black men to enlist in the Marine Corps.

As part of the famous 1st Marine Division, his bravery and service directly

helped lead to the end of the Korean war. However, like many other Black veterans, when he returned home, he wasn't given the reverence he earned.

We are trying to atone for that. Today, as we honor his life and service, I want to express our gratitude on behalf of all those who didn't and should have.

Thomas Cork, Sr., is an American hero who fought two battles, in the Pacific and on the home front.

His legacy will live on for generations to come, and we thank him for his service.

RECOGNIZING KEVIN BOYLE OF BROADVIEW HEIGHTS, OHIO

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

Mr. MILLER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kevin Boyle of Broadview Heights, Ohio.

Kevin came to America through adoption from El Salvador after his mom met him there while she did mission work there.

Kevin was very sick and had significant disabilities. The Boyles already had another child, Courtney, who herself had disabilities and significant medical needs. With great faith, they pursued adopting Kevin from a country that adopts out less than 10 kids per year.

After 4 years of waiting, in 2013, Kevin came home to Cleveland as an 18-pound 9-year-old. Yes, he was 18 pounds at 9 years old.

With great American medical care, he very quickly became chubby, silly, and full of life.

As an upstanding citizen of northeast Ohio, Kevin exercised his right to vote for the first time in the 2024 Presidential election.

Today, I celebrate Kevin for this milestone event. This is an incredible story to be shared around the country. What a victory.

REMEMBERING OMER NEUTRA

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

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Omer Neutra who deferred his enrollment at Binghamton University in my district to join the Israel Defense Forces. He had been missing since October 7, 2023, in the barbaric attacks committed against Israel and Israeli citizens by Hamas.

After fighting for over a year for his return, his parents received the news no parent should ever hear: Omer was killed on October 7 by Hamas terrorists.

The monsters who did this, and, yes, they are monsters, are still out there. We are not done fighting. With our support, Israel will overcome Hamas and win its war, and at home we will win our war against anti-Semitism.

We will win by shining a light on bigotry and calling out those who sympathize with terrorists, the people who, while Omer's family lived in agony, stood on college campuses hurling insults at Jewish students and leading anti-Semitic chants like ''from the river to the sea.''

Our hearts and prayers go out to Omer's family, his friends, and the Binghamton campus. His life and memory will forever be a blessing, and the pain he endured will be motivation to keep fighting for justice.

HONORING THE LIFE OF OFFICER JESSE BRANCH

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

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to pay my respects to Red Lake Police Officer Jesse Branch, who was killed in a car crash last week while responding to a call for service.

At just 18 years old, Jesse committed himself to a career in law enforcement, starting as a corrections officer with the Red Lake Detention Center and eventually becoming a police officer.

During his 17 years in law enforcement, Jesse earned the reputation as a man of integrity who was dedicated to the well-being and safety of his community.

Even though Jesse's life was tragically cut short, the positive impact he had on the Red Lake Nation will be remembered for generations to come.

Minnesota thanks him for his selfless service and sacrifice. My prayers are with his family, friends, colleagues, and all those who loved him.

PROVE IT ACT OF 2024

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1602, I call up the bill (H.R. 7198) to amend title 5, United States Code, to require greater transparency for Federal regulatory decisions that impact small businesses, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NORMAN). Pursuant to House Resolution 1602, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary, printed in the bill is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 7198

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Prove It Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. INITIAL REGULATOR FLE IBILIT ANALSIS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 603(b)—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) where feasible, any reasonably foreseeable potential indirect costs the proposed rule may impose on small entities, including small entities that—

''(A) purchase products or services from, sell products or services to, or otherwise conduct business with entities directly regulated by the rule;

''(B) are directly regulated by other governmental entities as a result of the rule; or

''(C) are not directly regulated by the agency as a result of the rule but are otherwise subject to other agency rules as a result of the rule.'';

(2) in section 605(b), by striking ''The agency'' and inserting ''Not later than 10 days after completing the certification described in this subsection, the agency''; and

(3) by inserting after section 605 the following:

§ 605A. R s

''(a) FILING A PETITION TO REVIEW AGENCY CERTIFICATION OF A PROPOSED RULE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any small entity, group of small entities, or organization representing the interests of small entities may petition the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration (in this section referred to as the 'Chief Counsel') to review a certification published under section 605(b) that a proposed rule will not, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

''(2) FORM.—The Chief Counsel shall—

''(A) determine the method, timing, and form of disseminating a petition described in paragraph (1); and

''(B) display the information described in subparagraph (A) on the website of the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration in a conspicuous manner.

''(3) CONTENTS.—Each petition described in paragraph (1) with respect to a certification published under section 605(b) for a proposed rule shall clearly and concisely—

''(A) specify the name of the petitioner and a telephone number, a mailing address, and an email address that the Chief Counsel may use to communicate with the petitioner;

''(B) if the petitioner is an organization, provide additional identifying information, as applicable, including the organizational or corporate status of the petitioner, the State of incorporation of the petitioner, the registered agent of the petitioner, the interest of the petitioner in representing small entities affected by the proposed rule and the certification at issue, and the name and authority of the individual who signed the petition on behalf of the organizational or corporate petitioner;

''(C) present the specific problems or issues that the petitioner believes should be addressed or considered through a review of the certification, such as—

''(i) any specific circumstances in which the determination of the certification that the proposed rule will not, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities is incorrect, incomplete, or inadequate; or

''(ii) why the proposed rule would, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities;

''(D) cite, enclose, or reference any relevant and non-protected or confidential technical, scientific, or other data or information supporting any assertion of the problems or issues with the certification;

''(E) present a proposed solution to the problems or issues raised in the petition, including potential regulatory or compliance alternatives to the proposed rule;

''(F) provide an analysis, discussion, or argument that explains how the proposed solution

described in subparagraph (E) solves the problems or issues raised in the petition; and

''(G) cite, enclose, or reference any other publicly available data or information supporting the proposed solution described in subparagraph (E).

''(b) CONSULTATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any entity or organization desiring to file a petition under subsection (a) may request a consultation with the Chief Counsel before or after filing the petition.

''(2) FORM.—The Chief Counsel shall—

''(A) determine the method, timing, and form of requesting a consultation with the Chief Counsel under paragraph (1); and

''(B) display the information described in subparagraph (A) on the website of the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration in a conspicuous manner.

''(3) LIMITATIONS ON ASSISTANCE.—In any consultation regarding a petition under paragraph (1), the Chief Counsel—

''(A) may only—

''(i) describe the process for filing, docketing, tracking, closing, amending, withdrawing, and resolving the petition; and

''(ii) assist the petitioner to clarify the petition so that the Chief Counsel is able to understand the issues of concern to the petitioner; and

''(B) may not advise a petitioner on whether the petition should be amended or withdrawn.

''(c) PRIMA FACIE REVIEW.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon receipt of a petition filed under this section with respect to the certification of a proposed rule, the Chief Counsel shall make an initial prima facie determination on the merit of the issues raised in petition as to the properness of the certification and whether the proposed rule in question would, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

''(2) NO FURTHER REVIEW.—If, following the prima facie review of a petition under paragraph (1), the Chief Counsel determines that the issues raised in the petition do not merit further review by the Chief Counsel, the Chief Counsel shall, not later than 10 days after receipt of the petition, inform the petitioner of that determination and the matter shall be closed.

''(3) FURTHER REVIEW.—If, following the prima facie review of a petition under paragraph (1), the Chief Counsel determines that the issues raised in the petition do merit further review by the Chief Counsel, the Chief Counsel shall, not later than 10 days after receipt of the petition, inform the petitioner and the agency that promulgated the proposed rule that the Chief Counsel shall conduct a full review of the certification and proposed rule to which the petition relates under subsection (d).

''(d) FULL REVIEW.—

''(1) CONSIDERATIONS; MEETING.—In conducting a full review under this subsection with respect to the certification made under section 605(b), the Chief Counsel shall—

''(A) consider—

''(i) whether the agency that promulgated the proposed rule correctly determined which small entities will be affected by the proposed rule;

''(ii) whether the agency considered adequate economic data to assess whether the proposed rule will have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities; and

''(iii) the economic implications of the proposed rule; and

''(B) convene a virtual or in-person meeting between the Chief Counsel, the petitioner, representatives of the agency that promulgated the proposed rule who are determined appropriate by the Chief Counsel, and the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory affairs to—

''(i) provide positions and support for those positions regarding the certification of the proposed rule; and

''(ii) allow the Chief Counsel to ask questions as the Chief Counsel determines necessary to make a final determination as to the validity of the certification.

''(2) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Chief Counsel begins a full review of a certification made with respect to a proposed rule under paragraph (1), the Chief Counsel shall submit to the petitioner and the agency that promulgated the proposed rule, and publish in the Federal Register and on the website of the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, the results of the review conducted under paragraph (1).

''(3) REQUIREMENT TO PERFORM ANALYSES.—If, after a full review of a certification made with respect to a proposed rule under paragraph (1), the Chief Counsel determines that the proposed rule will, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities, the agency that promulgated the proposed rule shall perform an initial regulatory flexibility analysis and a final regulatory flexibility analysis for the proposed rule under sections 603 and 604, respectively.

''(4) PENALTY.—If an agency fails to attend the required meeting under paragraph (1)(B) or in any other way fails to assist the Chief Counsel in a full review under paragraph (1) with respect to a proposed rule of the agency, as determined by the Chief Counsel, the final rule shall not apply to small entities.

''(5) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—For purposes of judicial review under chapter 7 of this title, a certification made by an agency under section 605(b) for which a petition is filed under subsection (a) shall be considered final agency action as of the date on which the Chief Counsel—

''(A) makes a determination under subsection (c)(2) that the issues raised in the petition do not merit further review; or

''(B) publishes the results of a full review of the certification under paragraph (1).''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 605 the following:

''605A. Review procedures relating to initial regulatory flexibility analysis certifications.''.

SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF GUIDANCE.

Section 609 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(f) With respect to any rule that an agency determines is likely to have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities, the head of the agency shall, on regulations.gov or any similar internet website—

''(1) publish all guidance documents and other relevant documents, as determined by the agency, including any updated guidance documents that set forth interpretations of the rule; and

''(2) allow for comments on the documents described in paragraph (1) to ensure that small entities may access and provide feedback on those documents.''.

SEC. 4. REVIEW PROCEDURES FOR SECTION 610 PERIODIC REVIEW OF RULES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 610 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''the following factors'';

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(C) in paragraph (5), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) any indirect costs described in the initial regulatory flexibility analysis under section 603(b)(6), and any other indirect costs that may have arisen during the 10-year period described in subsection (a).''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(d) If an agency fails to conduct a review of a rule as required under this section within the 10-year period described in subsection (a)—

''(1) the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration shall notify the agency that the rule has ceased to be effective;

''(2) the agency shall publish in the Federal Register a notification that the rule has ceased to be effective, and solicit comments for why the rule should be reinstated; and

''(3) if, based on the comments received under paragraph (2), the agency determines that the rule should be reinstated—

''(A) the agency shall have 180 days beginning on the date of that determination to complete the review of the rule under this section; and

''(B) upon completion of the review under subparagraph (A), the rule shall be reinstated, notwithstanding the notice and comment rulemaking procedures under section 553 of this title.''.

(b) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by subsection (a)(2) shall apply with respect to any final rule issued by an agency—

(1) during the 5-year period preceding the date of enactment of this Act; or

(2) on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the Chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees.

After 1 hour of debate on the bill, as amended, it shall be in order to consider the further amendment printed in part B of House Report 118–791, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be considered read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question.

The gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. HAGEMAN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 7198.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act of 2024.

This is an important bipartisan piece of legislation that will help small businesses around the country comply with the overwhelming weight of Federal regulation.

It is no secret that small businesses around the United States face an uphill battle when complying with Federal regulations. Many regulations cause significant economic impacts on these small businesses.

□ 1230

When small businesses are forced to shoulder the burden of these regulations, it results in higher prices at the cash register. It also can keep some small businesses out of the market altogether. Rather than facing a mountain of regulation and compliance

costs, some would-be small business owners may never achieve their dream of opening a small business.

Under the Regulatory Flexibility Act, the agencies that make these damaging regulations are supposed to take small businesses into account when writing the rules. All too often, however, the agencies are out of compliance with the RFA's mandates.

One report actually found that, in 75 percent of the rulemakings, the agencies either ignored costs on small businesses, or underestimated the regulations costs. H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act of 2024, would strengthen the RFA's already-existing provisions and make it so that agencies have a much harder time skirting their statutory obligations to our country's small businesses.

The Prove It Act of 2024 allows small businesses to petition the Small Business Administration to investigate a rulemaking process when a small business owner believes the agency inadequately performed its regulatory analysis as required by the RFA. It also authorizes the SBA's chief advocacy counsel to independently investigate a rulemaking agency's compliance with the RFA. Finally, it creates a penalty for rulemaking agencies that failed to comply with the RFA's requirements.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle may claim that this bill is only an attempt to slow down the agency rulemaking, making it more difficult for the Federal Government to oversee the economy. This is incorrect.

There are no provisions in this bill that are designed to slow down rulemaking. In fact, the only thing that may slow down an agency's rulemaking endeavor is having to fully comply with the law as it is already written. The RFA was passed in 1980. Yet, there are still agencies which do not take the specific needs of small businesses into account when crafting regulations.

If Federal regulators followed the law as Congress intended, the legislation before us would not be necessary. Unfortunately, Federal regulators have been delinquent in their obligations to American small business owners.

H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act of 2024, is a bipartisan effort to force regulators to comply with existing statutes and consider small business owners when crafting legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act, represents the latest effort by Republicans to dismantle the regulatory process, giving well-resourced special interests a powerful new cudgel to wield against regulations, while causing harm to the very small entities the bill purports to help.

This legislation would vest enormous and unreviewable authority over agency rules to the chief counsel of the Office of Advocacy within the Small Business Administration, a chronically underfunded office that has not even had a Senate-confirmed leader since 2017.

It authorizes the chief counsel, unilaterally and without review, to exempt large parts of the business community from proposed rules if he or she determines that an agency did not properly consider how a proposed rule would affect small entities.

Not only would this broad and vaguely defined authority apply to proposed regulations, but the bill would also charge the chief counsel with tracking agencies' completion of mandatory reviews of existing rules every 10 years. If they find that an agency failed to conduct the required review of the rule, they can simply suspend operation of the rule.

I note that, while this legislation would impose significant new burdens on the SBA, it would provide no additional funding to carry out these duties, putting a further strain on the agency's ability to assist small businesses.

Our public agencies are responsible for writing rules that protect our community from harm. They make sure that the toys our children play with are safe. They make sure that the vehicles we drive and the buildings we live in are up to code. They make sure that the legislation we pass in Congress for tackling issues like climate change and public health are implemented as we intend.

The Prove It Act would grind all of this to a halt. Rules that would ban toxic chemicals or take contaminated food out of the market would hang in limbo while petitions mount before this single official to complete his or her reviews, if he or she can ever complete them at all.

This bill is not about lessening the burden on small businesses. By law, agencies already must take small businesses into account. These small entities already have power through the Office of Advocacy to champion their concerns, so the bill is entirely unnecessary if that was truly the purpose of the bill.

In reality, this bill is about giving big businesses the ability to shut down the regulatory process. Any group that merely purports to represent small businesses, no matter how large or well-resourced they may be, could petition this one official to block a pending rule they do not like. There would be no limit to how many times they do this. This is a recipe for chaos and dysfunction. That, of course, is the point.

Republicans do not want to empower the agencies that ensure the drugs we take are safe, that ensure child car seats protect the most vulnerable among us, and that enforce our competition laws to ensure that small businesses have a chance to thrive. They want to throw sand in the gears of these agencies to ensure that they never issue the regulations we depend on to keep us safe.

This bill would do little to help small businesses, but it could prove to be a windfall for powerful companies and special interests. It is no surprise, therefore, that this legislation is right out of the Project 2025 playbook, which calls for ''supercharging'' the Office of Advocacy at the SBA so the entity can ''dismantle extreme regulatory policies and advance limited-government reforms.''

Republicans are so determined to carry out this dismantling of the regulatory process that they are even willing to violate their own House rules against legislation that will increase mandatory spending, ignoring a CBO estimate that the bill would add millions of dollars to the deficit.

We all want to ensure that small businesses can thrive, but this bill would not help them. Instead, it would create uncertainty and chaos while giving big businesses a new tool to dismantle the regulatory process that protects public health and safety and that protects consumers from rising costs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to oppose this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the CBO score for this bill.

H.R. 7198, PROVE IT ACT OF 2024 AS REPORTED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY ON NOVEMBER 22, 2024

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars—		
	2025	2025–2029	2025–2034
Direct Spending (Outlays) ..	1	5	10
Revenues	*	*	−7
Increase or Decrease (−) in the Deficit	1	5	17
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	6	40	not estimated

* = between −$500,000 and zero.

Increases *net direct spending* in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2035? < $2.5 billion.

Increases *on-budget deficits* in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2035? < $5 billion.

Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply? Yes.

Mandate Effects:

Contains intergovernmental mandate? No.

Contains private-sector mandate? Yes, under threshold.

The bill would:

Allow small businesses, nonprofit organizations, and small local governments to request that the Small Business Administration (SBA) review a certification that a proposed rule would not have a significant economic effect on a substantial number of such small entities

Require the SBA to declare a rule no longer in effect if the issuing agency fails to review that rule periodically

Impose mandates on private-sector entities

Estimated budgetary effects would mainly stem from:

Requiring some federal agencies to devote staff to meet new analysis and reporting requirements

Increasing costs for agencies that are funded through annual appropriations to carry out the bill's provisions

Increasing direct spending and decreasing revenues for several fee-funded, independent

agencies and the Federal Reserve System to carry out provisions of the bill

Bill summary: H.R. 7198 would allow small businesses, nonprofit organizations, and small local governments to request that the Small Business Administration (SBA) review federal agencies' certifications that proposed rules would not significantly affect a substantial number of small entities. The bill would require the SBA to establish a process for reviewing those requests and determining whether certifications merit further review. (Federal agencies currently evaluate proposed rules' economic effects on small entities and either certify that a rule would not significantly affect them or they prepare a detailed regulatory flexibility analysis for the rule. A regulatory flexibility analysis is an assessment of a proposed regulation on small entities.)

If further review is required, the SBA would consult the rulemaking agency, representatives of the small entities, and the Office of Management and Budget to determine whether, in place of a certification, the rulemaking agency must prepare a regulatory flexibility analysis. If the agency does not complete that process, the final rule would not apply to small entities.

Additionally, under the bill, if an agency fails to update its analysis of a rule's effect on small entities within 10 years of the rule taking effect, as they are required to do under current law, the rule would no longer be in effect. That provision would apply to rules for which agencies should have provided updated analysis within the 5-year period prior to the bill's enactment. Under the bill, a rulemaking agency could seek to reinstate a rule by carrying out a new rulemaking process.

Estimated Federal cost: The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within multiple budget functions.

Basis of estimate: For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 7198 will be enacted near the end of calendar year 2024, that the estimated amounts will be appropriated in each year, and that outlays will follow historical spending patterns.

If an agency fails to comply with the bill's requirements, the SBA would determine that the existing or proposed rule is no longer in effect or would not apply to small entities. Because CBO expects that federal agencies would generally comply with the bill's requirements, we estimate that any budgetary effects stemming from that change would be insignificant.

In addition, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would increase administrative costs for most agencies because they would need additional staff to carry out the bill's provisions.

TABLE 1.—ESTIMATED BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF H.R. 7198

	By fiscal year, millions of dollars—											
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2025–2029	2025–2034
INCREASES IN DIRECT SPENDING												
Estimated Budget Authority	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	10
Estimated Outlays	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	10
DECREASES IN REVENUES												
Estimated Revenues	*	*	*	*	*	−3	−1	−1	−1	−1	*	−7
NET INCREASE IN THE DEFICIT FROM CHANGES IN DIRECT SPENDING AND REVENUES												
Effect on the Deficit	1	1	1	1	1	4	2	2	2	2	5	17
INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION												
Estimated Authorization	8	8	8	9	9	n.e.	n.e.	n.e.	n.e.	n.e.	42	n.e.
Estimated Outlays	6	8	8	9	9	n.e.	n.e.	n.e.	n.e.	n.e.	40	n.e.

n.e. = not estimated.
* = between −$500,000 and zero.

Direct spending: The administrative costs of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, National Credit Union Administration (NCUA), and Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), are classified in the budget as direct spending. Two of those agencies, the NCUA and the OCC, collect fees from financial institutions to offset their costs; those fees are treated as reductions in direct spending.

Using information about the rulemaking activities of those agencies, CBO estimates that the increased administrative workload under H.R. 7198 would increase net direct spending for those independent agencies by $10 million over the 2025–2034 period.

Revenues: H.R. 7198 also would affect revenues by increasing operating costs for the Federal Reserve System, which remits its net earnings to the Treasury; those remittances are classified as revenues in the federal budget. Based on the costs of similar activities, CBO estimates that the increased costs under the bill would reduce revenues by $7 million over the 2025–2034 period.

Spending subject to appropriation: CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 7198 also would increase spending for agencies that are funded by annual appropriations. CBO estimates that agencies that produce large numbers of rules affecting small entities would need more staff to meet the bill's requirements.

CBO expects that the agencies most affected by the bill include the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Labor, and Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency and Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Using information about similar activities, CBO estimates that the administrative costs for federal agencies to implement H.R. 7198 would total $35 million over the 2025–2029 period; any related spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Under current law, the SEC is authorized to collect fees sufficient to offset its annual appropriations. Therefore, CBO estimates that the net budgetary effect of that commission's activities to implement H.R. 7198 would be less than $500,000 over the 2025–2029 period, assuming appropriation actions consistent with the commission's authorities.

Finally, the requirement for the SBA to establish and carry out a process for small entities to request certification review would pose additional costs to that agency. Using information from the SBA, CBO estimates that those administrative costs would total $5 million over the 2025–2029 period; any related spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Pay-As-You-Go considerations: The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 establishes budget-reporting and enforcement procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or revenues. The net changes in outlays and revenues that are subject to those pay-as-you-go procedures are shown in Table 1.

Increase in long-term net direct spending and deficits: CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 7198 would not increase net direct spending by more than $2.5 billion in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2035.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 7198 would not increase on-budget deficits by more than $5 billion in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2035.

Mandates: If federal financial regulators increase annual fees to offset the costs of implementing the bill, H.R. 7198 would increase the costs of an existing private-sector mandate on entities required to pay those fees. CBO estimates that the incremental cost of the mandate would be small and would fall well below the annual threshold established in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) for private-sector mandates ($200 million in 2024, adjusted annually for inflation).

The bill contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA.

Previous CBO estimate: On December x, 2024, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act of 2024, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Small Business on September 10, 2024. The two pieces of legislation are similar, and CBO's estimates of their budgetary effects are the same.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Julia Aman (for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the National Credit Union Administration, and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency), David Hughes (for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau), Aurora Swanson (for the Small Business Administration and for federal agencies funded by annual appropriations); Revenues: Nathaniel Frentz; Mandates: Rachel Austin.

Estimate reviewed by: Justin Humphrey, Chief, Finance, Housing, and Education Cost Estimates Unit; Kathleen FitzGerald, Chief, Public and Private Mandates Unit; Christina Hawley Anthony, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

Estimate approved by: Phillip L. Swagel, Director, Congressional Budget Office.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. FINSTAD).

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bipartisan legislation, the Prove

It Act, which gives small businesses a seat at the table during the regulatory process and shields them from the most heavyhanded, one-size-fits-all regulations.

Government red tape has made it harder and more costly for Americans to start a business. For many, this hinders their opportunity to achieve the American Dream. For too long, D.C. bureaucrats have abused their power, trampling over the small businesses, which are the backbone of our communities.

Simply put, the Prove It Act gives teeth to the already-existing law, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, which is often ignored by Federal agencies in pursuit of their own political agenda.

Under RFA, agencies are required to complete an initial and final analysis of their regulations and certify that they will not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities. Unfortunately, in many cases, agencies have failed to meet the standards set out by the RFA and, in turn, have left our small business owners with the short end of the stick.

Throughout the last 4 years, the Biden-Harris administration has improperly certified dozens of regulations as not having a significant impact on a substantial number of small businesses.

Moreover, according to the American Action Forum, since 2009, Federal regulations have cost American taxpayers and businessowners $2.3 trillion to comply with them and have added 985 million hours of paperwork for our small businesses to shoulder. The Biden administration alone has accounted for $1.8 trillion of these costs and over 340 million paperwork hours.

With these compliance costs and paperwork hours skyrocketing, the Prove It Act is more important now than ever. Specifically, the Prove It Act will require Federal agencies to analyze both the direct and indirect costs their regulations would have on our small entities, create a way for small businesses to petition their chief advocate in government to review agencies' work and to make them prove that they are fully compliant with already-existing laws. If agencies fail to comply with the review process, small businesses would be exempt from the regulations in question.

Moreover, the bill ensures that small businesses can easily access pre-existing guidance documents via regulations.gov. If agencies failed to perform an already-required 10-year retrospective review, the regulations would be nullified, giving teeth to this requirement that currently is in statute.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from the National Federation of Independent Business; Job Creators Network; National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association; National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors; a coalition letter on Regulatory Flexibility Act reform signed by over 45 national associations; and a May 21, 2024, letter from numerous Chambers of Commerce.

NFIB,
Washington, DC, February 1, 2024.

Hon. BRAD FINSTAD,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE FINSTAD: On behalf of NFIB, the nation's leading small business advocacy organization, I write in support of the Prove It Act. This legislation would strengthen the requirements for agencies to analyze the impact of regulations on small businesses and increase small business engagement in the regulatory process.

NFIB members annually rate ''unreasonable government regulation'' as one of the top concerns facing small businesses. Unfortunately, the red tape and compliance burdens of small businesses continue to grow exponentially. According to a recent analysis, the total cost of federal regulations in 2022 was $3.079 trillion. The study found that the average U.S. company pays roughly $13,000 per employee to comply with federal regulations.

The pace of regulation has significantly increased over the last three years. As of January 26, 2024, President Biden had imposed more than $454 billion of final rule costs and 279 million paperwork hours. These regulatory costs are massive. However, they pale in comparison to the proposed $616 billion of regulatory costs and 191 million paperwork hours that are under development by the administration.

Small businesses often do not have compliance officers or lawyers to help navigate these massive new regulatory burdens. And existing laws like the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) were enacted to minimize the disproportionate impact that federal regulations have on small businesses. However, as NFIB's 2023 found, agencies use loopholes in the RFA to underreport, minimize, or ignore the impact of regulations on small businesses.

This circumvention of the RFA is unacceptable and small businesses ultimately pay the regulatory price in forgone growth and opportunity. That is why legislation like the Prove It Act is so important. The Prove It Act seeks to address the loopholes in the RFA by increasing small business input in the regulatory process and strengthening the requirements for agencies to examine the impacts of regulations on small businesses.

NFIB supports the Prove It Act and urges Congress to promptly enact this legislation. Small businesses appreciate your continued leadership to reduce onerous regulatory burdens and red tape.

Sincerely,

JOSH MCLEOD,
Director, Federal Government Relations
NFIB.

JCN,
Addison, TX, March 20, 2024.

Hon. JIM JORDAN,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. JERROLD NADLER,
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN JORDAN, RANKING MEMBER NADLER, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE: In advance of the Judiciary Committee's markup tomorrow, the Job Creators Network expresses its strong support for the ''Prove it Act of 2024.'' JCN urges the Committee to pass this bipartisan legislation that would ensure federal agencies conduct meaningful reviews of the burden proposed rules would have on small business and hold them accountable if they do not.

JCN is a nonpartisan organization founded by entrepreneurs who believe that many government policies are getting in the way of the economic freedom that helped make this country prosperous.

JCN provides business leaders and entrepreneurs with the tools to become the voice of free enterprise in the media, in Congress, in state capitals, in their communities, and their workplaces—allowing them to hold politicians accountable to job creators and their employees.

The ''Prove it Act of 2024'' would help shield small businesses from executive overreach and provide Main Street with important tools to help contend with government overregulation.

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy small businesses employ almost half—46.4 percent—of America's employees. Truly America's job creators, small businesses accounted for 62.7 percent of net new jobs from 1995 to 2021.

Despite their significant contributions to our nation's economy, small business owners get the short end of the stick when it comes to regulation—one size does not fit all.

It is well-documented that small business owners are disproportionately negatively impacted by regulation as compared to big businesses.

When it comes to regulation, it is important to remember that seventy-nine percent of small businesses have fewer than ten employees. Firms with fewer than ten employees do not employ attorneys, accountants, or human resource professionals. If they are lucky, they have someone to manage sales. As a practical matter that means that it is the small business owner who is tasked with those duties, many of which involve regulatory compliance.

Moreover, it is well-documented that small business owners spend more on regulation than larger businesses. Businesses with fewer than fifty employees pay $14,700 per employee, as compared to $13,890 per employee for medium-sized businesses, and $12,200 per employee for large businesses.

Despite these realities, increasingly we see federal regulators view their legal obligation to assess small business impact of new regulations as nothing more than a ''check the box'' exercise. According to an investigation conducted by the House Committee on Small Business, many government agencies in Washington are ''failing to properly implement'' statutes intended to shield small businesses from overburdensome regulations.

For example, the Army Corps of Engineers has twice certified as not significantly impacting small businesses its proposal to redefine ''waters of the United States'' in a way that would require millions of landowners to get a federal permit before doing things as simple as moving mulch. Similarly, the Department of Labor had the audacity to certify its recent regulation that effectively converts most independent contractors into employees as a mandate with little impact on small business. These are just two of many examples where federal bureaucrats are not following the letter and spirit of the Regulatory Flexibility Act when it comes to protecting small businesses from one-size-fits-all regulation.

The ''Prove it Act of 2024'' fulfills a key pillar of the Job Creators Network's American Small Business Prosperity Plan—an eight-point policy blueprint—by reducing the regulatory burden on small businesses.

The ''Prove it Act of 2024'' would bolster existing law that federal agencies have been side-stepping at the expense of small businesses. It would hold agencies accountable by providing a meaningful opportunity for small businesses to challenge an agency certification that a proposed regulation would not impact a substantial number of small entities. And small businesses would be exempt

from any rule in which an agency fails to follow the law.

Small business regulatory protections are in dire need of restoration. Passage of the ''Prove it Act of 2024'' would be a step in the right direction. We commend the Committee for marking up this important legislation and urge its passage. It is time for our elected leaders in Washington to prioritize Main Street.

ALFREDO ORTIZ,
CEO, Job Creators Network.

NSSGA,
Alexandria, VA, February 29, 2024.

Hon. BRIAN FINSTAD,
U.S. Congressman,
Washington, DC.
Hon. YADIRA CARAVEO,
U.S. Congresswoman,
Washington, DC.
Hon. NATHANIEL MORAN,
U.S. Congressman,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FINSTAD, CONGRESSWOMAN CARAVEO, AND CONGRESSMAN MORAN: I am writing on behalf of the over 400 members of the National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (NSSGA), to express our strong support for the bipartisan Prove It Act that you recently introduced. The aggregates industry, like many others, has faced considerable challenges due to the increasing complexity and scope of federal regulations. These regulations often impose substantial direct and indirect costs on small businesses, which unlike larger entities, lack the resources to navigate these regulatory burdens effectively.

NSSGA represents the aggregates industry, including thousands of quarries, sand and gravel operations, and other related businesses nationwide. NSSGA members conduct over 9,000 operations and employ over 100,000 citizens to create 2.5 billion tons of aggregates each year. These raw materials are essential to rebuild and repair our country's aging infrastructure and assist our nation's goals in lowering the overall energy cost for families.

The Prove It Act represents a significant step forward in ensuring that small businesses, including those within the aggregates sector, are not unduly burdened by regulations that can stifle innovation, reduce job creation, and hamper economic growth. By requiring federal agencies to analyze the impact of their regulations on small entities and limit these impacts, the legislation aligns with our longstanding commitment to sensible, balanced regulatory frameworks that protect the environment and public safety without imposing unnecessary costs on businesses.

Moreover, the Act's provisions for creating mechanisms for small businesses to raise concerns and request reviews are especially important. These measures provide a vital avenue for our members to ensure that regulations are fair, transparent, and consider the unique challenges faced by small businesses. Ensuring easy access to guidance documents and direct communication channels with regulators will also greatly benefit small businesses by reducing compliance uncertainty and fostering a more cooperative regulatory environment.

We thank you for your leadership and commitment to protecting small businesses from overbearing regulations. The Prove It Act will help ensure that federal agencies fully consider the impact of their actions on small entities, promoting a healthier business environment and supporting the vital contributions of small businesses to our national economy.

We look forward to the passage of this important legislation and stand ready to support its implementation to ensure that it delivers meaningful benefits to the aggregates industry and all small businesses across the country.

Sincerely,

MICHELE STANLEY,
Executive Vice President and Chief Advocacy Officer.

NAIFA,
Arlington, VA, February 5, 2024.

Hon. BRAD FINSTAD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE FINSTAD: On behalf of the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors (''NAIFA''), I write in support of the Prove It Act. This legislation would strengthen the requirements for agencies to analyze the impact of regulations on insurance producers, registered representatives of broker-dealers, and financial advisors.

Founded in 1890 as The National Association of Life Underwriters, NAIFA is the oldest, largest, and most prestigious association representing the interests of financial professionals from every Congressional district in the United States. Our mission—empowering financial professionals and consumers with world-class advocacy and education—is the reason NAIFA has consistently and resoundingly stood up for agents and called upon members to grow their knowledge while following the highest ethical standards in the industry.

NAIFA members are Main Street financial professionals. NAIFA members—comprised primarily of insurance agents, many of whom are also registered Broker-Dealer representatives—serve primarily middle-market clients, including individuals and small businesses. Nine out of ten NAIFA members report serving middle-income individuals and families and 67 percent work with small businesses. A typical client's annual household income falls below $150,000 for 69 percent of NAIFA members. In some cases, our members are the only financial advisor across multiple counties.

NAIFA members are also small business owners. Many of our members work in small firms—sometimes firms of one—with little administrative or back-office support. Often, their business practices are dictated by the broker-dealer with whom they work, including the format and provision of client forms and disclosures. They are also subject to transaction-level oversight and review by the broker-dealer.

The Prove It Act would require federal agencies to consider reasonably foreseeable indirect future costs of their proposed federal regulations as part of their Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, where feasible. The proposed legislation also creates a process whereby small businesses and organizations representing small business can ask the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy to formally review a federal agency's certification that a proposed regulatory rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA). This ensures small businesses will be able to raise concerns that a rule was improperly certified and have a third-party review and determine whether certification was proper.

The Prove It Act would also require that, for any guidance document or other relevant documents clarifying or interpreting any rule found by agencies to likely have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities, agencies shall publish said documents, as determined by the agency, to Regulations.gov or similar website and allow for comments to ensure small businesses can both easily access the resources and provide feedback or request additional clarity where needed.

The regulatory burden on insurance producers, registered representatives of broker-dealers, and financial advisors is often put in place without proper discussion or concern for the negative impact on the ability to conduct business or properly serve clients and consumers. Additionally, federal regulators often work to circumnavigate the RFA, which leads to a loss of growth and opportunity for these small businesses that represent Main Street America and make up an integral part of the community in which they work. That is why legislation like the Prove It Act is so important. The Prove It Act seeks to address the loopholes in the RFA by increasing small business input in the regulatory process and strengthening the requirements for agencies to examine the impacts of regulations on small businesses.

NAIFA offers its full support to the Prove It Act and urges Congress to promptly enact this legislation. Insurance Producers, the registered representatives of broker-dealers, and financial advisors appreciate your continued leadership to reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens and to allow these vital insurance professionals to continue to serve the best interest of their clients.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL W. HEDGE, JR.
Senior Director, Government Relations, National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors.

September 5, 2024.

Hon. ROGER WILLIAMS,
Chairman, Committee on Small Business,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ,
Ranking Member, Committee on Small Business,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS AND RANKING MEMBER VELÁZQUEZ: On behalf of millions of small businesses across the country, we write to thank you for prioritizing legislation to provide regulatory relief and reduce red tape for small businesses. We urge the Committee to advance legislation to strengthen the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) and ensure the intent of the law is fulfilled.

Small businesses are concerned with the unprecedented pace of regulations coming from Washington. Over the last three and a half years, more than $1.6 trillion in new regulatory costs and almost 300 million new paperwork hours have been imposed on the private sector. These new burdens fall disproportionately on small businesses that do not have lawyers and compliance officers to navigate complex regulatory issues.

In 1980, President Carter and Congress recognized the disproportionate impact of federal regulations on small businesses and unanimously approved the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA). The RFA sought to minimize the burdens on small businesses. However, in the 40-plus years since the RFA became law, agencies have found ways to disregard or avoid many of the requirements. In 2023, NFIB analyzed the Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Advocacy's comment letters to federal agencies from January 2021 to January 2023 and found significant noncompliance with the RFA. Advocacy highlighted 28 instances where agencies failed to adequately examine the economic costs of regulations. Advocacy noted that agencies often improperly certify that rules will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. By doing so, agencies disregard the intent of the RFA, leaving small businesses subject to the one-size-fits-all regulatory environment the RFA sought to remedy.

The House Committee on Small Business recently issued a staff report examining agency compliance with the RFA. The Committee found that most agencies are failing to properly comply with the RFAs requirements and live up to the spirit of the law. These findings mirror the conclusions of NFIB's 2023 White Paper and highlight the need to close loopholes to ensure the intent of the RFA is fulfilled.

In response to these findings, the Committee has prioritized several legislative proposals to strengthen the RFA. One proposal, the bipartisan Prove It Act, would increase small business input in the regulatory process and ensure agencies are fully accounting for the impact of regulations on small businesses. Other proposals would increase the transparency and accountability of the regulatory process for small businesses.

On behalf of millions of small businesses, thank you for your attention to the disproportionate impact of regulations on small entities. We appreciate the Committee's focus on ensuring the intent of the RFA is fulfilled through legislation like H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act. We urge Congress to take swift action to reduce red tape for small businesses.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Chemical Distribution, American Bakers Association, American Bankers Association, American Chemistry Council, American Craft Spirits Association, American Exploration & Mining Association, American Hotel & Lodging Association, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Road & Transportation Builders Association, American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, American Waterways Operators, Associated Builders and Contractors, Associated Equipment Distributors, Associated General Contractors of America, Can Manufacturers Institute, Energy Workforce & Technology Council, Independent Community Bankers of America, International Franchise Association, International Wood Products Association, Job Creators Network, National Asphalt Pavement Association.

National Association of Convenience Stores, National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors, National Association of Manufacturers, National Association of Realtors, National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Federation of Independent Business, National Fisheries Institute, National Funeral Directors Association, National Grocers Association, National Lumber & Building Material Dealers Association, National Mining Association, National Pork Producers Council, National Propane Gas Association, National Retail Federation, National Roofing Contractors Association, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, National Small Business Association, National Stone Sand & Gravel Association, North American Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers, Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors—National Association, Precision Machined Products Association, PRINTING United Alliance, The Meat Institute, The Toy Association, Treated Wood Council, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, USA Rice.

MAY *21, 2024*.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: The undersigned chambers of commerce strongly support H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act of 2024, and urge the House to consider this important legislation.

This bipartisan bill was introduced by Representatives Brad Finstad, Nathaniel Moran, and Yadira Caraveo and is co-sponsored by Representatives Mike Gallagher, Harriett Hageman, Maria Salazar, David Valadao, and Carol Miller. H.R. 7198 was reported by the Judiciary Committee in March and would be a major step forward for small businesses that are harmed by excessive federal regulations.

American small business owners are job creators and innovators. While their contributions to their communities and to the American economy are enormous, they bear an unreasonably heavy burden when it comes to regulatory costs. The annual cost of complying with federal regulations has risen by $465 billion since 2012 and now totals over $3 trillion (12 percent of U.S. GDP). The per employee cost of $12,800 for small businesses is 20 percent greater than the cost per employee at their larger competitors.

The Regulatory Flexibility Act—passed 44-years ago—was intended to correct the lopsided burden on small business and require that regulators tailor rules to meet government objectives while minimizing the burden on small businesses. Unfortunately, federal agencies too often exploit loopholes in the law to hide costs imposed on Main Street businesses and to ignore their feedback.

The Prove it Act of 2024 would close those loopholes and bring more transparency to the true costs of red tape on America's innovators, job creators, and community builders. The bill would also prevent agencies from ignoring small business input in their rush to finalize new federal regulations.

We urge expeditious House consideration of H.R. 7198, the Prove it Act.

Sincerely,

Alabama:

Chandler Chamber of Commerce, Coastal Alabama Business Chamber, Enterprise Chamber of Commerce, Mobile Chamber, Prattville Area Chamber of Commerce, SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce.

Alaska:

Alaska Chamber, Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, The Greater Juneau Chamber of Commerce.

Arizona:

Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Buckeye Valley Chamber of Commerce, Carefree Cave Creek Chamber of Commerce, Greater Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce, Greater Phoenix Chamber, Mesa Chamber of Commerce, Nogales Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce, Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce, Peoria Chamber of Commerce, Prescott Valley Chamber of Commerce, Queen Creek Chamber of Commerce, Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce, Southwest Valley Chamber, Springerville-Eagar Regional Chamber of Commerce, Tucson Metro Chamber, West Valley Chamber of Commerce Alliance, Wickenburg Chamber of Commerce, Yuma County Chamber of Commerce.

Arkansas:

AR State Chamber/AIA, Holiday Island Chamber of Commerce, Little Rock Regional Chamber, Rogers-Lowell Chamber of Commerce.

California

Anaheim Chamber of Commerce, Brea Chamber of Commerce, California Chamber of Commerce, Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce, Chatsworth Porter Ranch Chamber of Commerce, Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce, Colusa County Chamber of Commerce, Greater Bakersfield Chamber, Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce, Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce, Greater Grass Valley Chamber of Commerce, Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce, La Mesa Chamber of Commerce, Laguna Hills Chamber of Commerce, Lodi District Chamber of Commerce, Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce, Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce, North San Diego Business Chamber, Oceanside Chamber of Commerce, Palm Desert Area Chamber of Commerce, Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce, Rancho Cordova Area Chamber of Commerce, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, San Juan Capistrano Chamber of Commerce, Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce, Santee Chamber of Commerce, South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce, Tracy Chamber of Commerce, West Ventura County Business Alliance, Yorba Linda Chamber of Commerce.

Colorado:

Vail Valley Partnership.

Florida:

Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce, Daytona Regional Chamber of Commerce, Lakeland Chamber of Commerce, St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, Visitor Information Center, The Greater Boca Raton Chamber of Commerce, Venice Area Chamber of Commerce.

Georgia:

Barrow County Chamber of Commerce, Inc., Cobb County Chamber of Commerce, Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, Habersham County Chamber of Commerce, Jackson County Area Chamber of Commerce, Murray County Chamber of Commerce, Newton Chamber of Commerce.

Hawaii:

Chamber of Commerce Hawaii, Kapolei Chamber of Commerce, Kauai Filipino Chamber of Commerce.

Idaho:

Twin Falls Area Chamber of Commerce.

Illinois:

Chamber630, Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce, GLMV Chamber of Commerce, Illinois Chamber of Commerce, Oak Lawn Chamber of Commerce, Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce, RiverBend Growth Association, Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Western DuPage Chamber of Commerce.

Indiana:

Greater Lawrence Chamber of Commerce, Indiana Chamber of Commerce, South Bend Regional Chamber of Commerce, Wayne County Area Chamber of Commerce.

Iowa:

Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance, Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce, Iowa Association of Business and Industry.

Kansas:

Goddard Chamber of Commerce, Greater Topeka Chamber, Parsons Chamber of Commerce.

Kentucky:

Greater Louisville, Inc., Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce.

Louisiana:

Central Louisiana Regional Chamber of Commerce, Greenwood Chamber of Commerce, St. Tammany Chamber of Commerce, West Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce.

Maine:

Boothbay Harbor Region Chamber of Commerce.

Maryland:

Maryland Chamber of Commerce, Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce, Talbot County Chamber of Commerce, Washington County Chamber of Commerce.

Massachusetts:

Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce, Metro South Chamber of Commerce, Peabody Area Chamber of Commerce, United Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Michigan:

Barry County Chamber and Economic Development Alliance, Cadillac Area Chamber of Commerce, Detroit Regional Chamber, Grand Rapids Chamber, Hartland Area Chamber of Commerce, Lansing Regional

Chamber of Commerce, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce, North Oakland Regional Chambers Association, Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber of Commerce, Three Rivers Area Chamber of Commerce.

Minnesota:

Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce, Austin Area Chamber of Commerce, Brainerd Lakes Chamber of Commerce, Cannon Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce, FORWARD Worthington, Glenwood Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce, Greater Mankato Growth, Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce, I–94 West Chamber of Commerce, Lonsdale Area Chamber of Commerce. Marshall Area Chamber of Commerce, Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, Princeton Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism, Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce, Shakopee Area Chamber of Commerce, SouthWest Metro Chamber of Commerce, St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce, Tracy Area Chamber, Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce, Windom Area Chamber of Commerce, Winona Area Chamber of Commerce.

Mississippi:

Hancock County Chamber of Commerce.

Montana:

Billings Chamber of Commerce, Glasgow Area Chamber of Commerce & Agriculture, Inc., Missoula Area Chamber of Commerce, Montana Chamber of Commerce.

Nebraska:

Grand Island Area Chamber of Commerce, Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce Nebraska Chamber of Commerce, North Platte Area Chamber & Development Corporation, Washington County Chamber of Commerce.

Nevada:

Carson City Chamber of Commerce, Henderson Chamber of Commerce, Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce Vegas Chamber, White Pine Chamber of Commerce.

New Hampshire:

Business & Industry Association New Hampshire.

New Jersey:

New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce, The African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey.

New York:

Capital Region Chamber of Commerce, North Country Chamber of Commerce, Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce, The Business Council of NYS, Inc.

North Carolina:

Alamance Chamber of Commerce, Charlotte Regional Business Alliance, Greater Mount Airy Chamber of Commerce, Mint Hill Chamber of Commerce, Moore County Chamber of commerce NC Chamber, The Caldwell Chamber.

North Dakota:

Greater North Dakota Chamber, The Chamber Grand Forks-East Grand Forks, Williston Area Chamber of Commerce.

Ohio:

Chillicothe Ross Chamber of Commerce, Huber Heights Chamber of Commerce, Ohio Chamber of Commerce, Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce, Troy Area Chamber of Commerce, Zanesville-Muskingum County Chamber of Commerce.

Oklahoma:

State Chamber of Oklahoma, Tulsa Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Oregon:

Albany Area Chamber of Commerce, Bend Chamber of Commerce, Canby Area Chamber of Commerce, Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce, Lake County Chamber of Commerce, Oregon Business & Industry, Oregon State Chamber of Commerce, Roseburg Area Chamber of Commerce, Salem Area Chamber of Commerce, The Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce, Washington County Chamber of Commerce.

Pennsylvania:

Alle Kiski Strong Chamber, Blair County Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Business and Industry of Centre County, Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce, Greater Latrobe-Laurel Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce, Hanover Area Chamber of Commerce, Harrisburg Regional Chamber & CREDC, Huntingdon County Chamber of Commerce, Indian Valley Chamber of Commerce, Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce, Somerset County Chamber of Commerce, Southern Chester County Chamber of Commerce, TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce, Venango Area Chamber of Commerce, Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce, York County Economic Alliance.

Rhode Island:

Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce.

South Carolina:

Anderson Area Chamber of Commerce, Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce, Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce, South Carolina Chamber of Commerce

South Dakota:

South Dakota Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Tennessee:

Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Texas:

Cedar Park Chamber of Commerce, Cuero Chamber of Commerce, Agriculture & Visitors Center, Denison Area Chamber of Commerce, Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce, Greater Waco Chamber, Kaufman Chamber of Commerce, Kilgore Area Chamber of Commerce, Longview TX Chamber of Commerce, Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce, Nacogdoches County Chamber of Commerce, North Texas Commission, Rowlett Chamber of Commerce, Texas Association of Business, United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce.

Utah:

Cedar City Chamber of Commerce, ChamberWest Chamber of Commerce, Davis Chamber of Commerce, Salt Lake Chamber, South Valley Chamber of Commerce, Utah Pacific IsLander Chamber.

Virginia:

Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, Hampton Roads Chamber, Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce, Virginia Chamber of Commerce.

Washington:

Burlington Chamber of Commerce, Covington Chamber of Commerce, Economic Alliance Snohomish County, Greater Lake Stevens Chamber of Commerce, Mercer Island Chamber of Commerce, Thurston County Chamber of Commerce.

Wisconsin:

Beaver Dam Area Chamber of Commerce, Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce, Rice Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce.

Wyoming:

Campbell County Chamber of Commerce, Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce, Lander Chamber of Commerce, Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce, Wyoming State Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, the Prove It Act gives the hardworking American small businesses a voice in the regulatory process. It is time that we strengthen and empower our small business community rather than force them to comply with unnecessary and burdensome regulations.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative CARAVEO and Representative MORAN for partnering with me on this important legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote in support of the Prove It Act.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Mrs. LEE CARTER), the newest Member of the Judiciary Committee, proudly carrying on her mother's legacy.

Mrs. LEE CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act of 2024, a bill that would vest the chief counsel of the Office of Advocacy within the Small Business Administration, which has been chronically underfunded—and I wish we were spending time on that instead of this bill—with enormous and unreviewable authority over agency rules.

More specifically, H.R. 7198 authorizes the chief counsel, unilaterally and without review, to exempt large parts of the business community from proposed rules if he or she determines that an agency did not properly consider how a proposed rule could affect small entities.

In doing so, this bill would empower large companies and undermine the regulatory process that keeps Americans safe by imposing a series of requirements on regulatory agencies.

As we all know, regulatory agencies play a critical role in our safety and well-being by writing rules designed to protect our food supply, environment, physical infrastructure, and more. These regulations safeguard the freedoms that all Americans enjoy.

While efforts to ease burdens on small businesses can be useful, they should not prevent regulators from doing their jobs in the public interests.

The Prove It Act, under the guise of helping all small businesses, would actually allow an unelected administrator within the SBA to circumvent congressional and agency intent with little oversight. It is simply unacceptable that we would task a single official in the SBA with unilateral and unreviewable authority to suspend new and existing protections and safeguards for large swaths of the economy, not to mention that it would also require agencies to jump through new, vaguely defined and nontransparent bureaucratic hoops, which would cause delays and uncertainty, all the while doing nothing to actually help small businesses.

In fact, the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards, consisting of over 200 labor, consumer, and environmental organizations, oppose this bill, including the AFL–CIO, Economic Policy Institute, and National Women's Law Center.

It is important to convey to the American people that this bill is also simply unnecessary. By law, agencies already take small businesses into account, and these small entities already

have power through the Office of Advocacy to champion their concerns.

Rules and protections are critical to ensuring the safety and soundness of virtually every facet of our lives, including clean air, clean water, safe toys that my children might use, safe cars while I drive my children to school, and safe workplaces for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, we should reject any efforts that would prevent agencies from issuing these lifesaving regulations. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act, a bipartisan piece of legislation to protect small businesses from the burdens of Federal regulations.

I was proud to join Congressman FINSTAD and Congresswoman CARAVEO in introducing this bill and to vote for it in the House Judiciary Committee.

This legislation puts teeth into the Regulatory Flexibility Act, which has been discussed today. In 1980, it required Federal agencies to take into consideration the direct and indirect impacts of their regulations on small and family businesses, but it is not being enforced today.

□ 1245

Effectively, there is no recourse to those businesses under the Regulatory Flexibility Act, which is why, in more than 75 percent of the cases, these new regulations actually completely ignore that Regulatory Flexibility Act or put a de minimis amount attached to the impact on small businesses.

We need teeth to that 1980 Regulatory Flexibility Act, and the Prove It Act will do just that. It will change what has not been done in the past, and it will restore power to small businesses today to push back against new regulations.

Today, small businesses pay seven times more per employee than medium-sized businesses to stay compliant with Federal regulations. They don't have the resources to keep pace with the ever-growing burdens imposed by the heavy hand of the government.

I am amazed that I am hearing from the opposition words like ''delay,'' ''burden,'' and ''uncertainty'' as it relates to the Federal Government. I am more concerned with the delays, burden, uncertainty, and inadequate resources that exist for small businesses to respond to these new regulations.

Federal agencies seem to ignore the reality and harm that these regulations cause, which only further discourages American innovation and small business growth.

The Prove It Act empowers small businesses to petition the Small Business Administration to review proposed Federal regulations and gives them the tools to challenge unnecessary regulation imposed upon them, which they do not have today. It brings more accountability and transparency to the work of government agencies and reaffirms our commitment to stand with small business.

If we are going to stand on the side of government or small business, I choose to stand on the side of small business. Small businesses are, in fact, the backbone of our economy, and their innovation keeps the spirit of the American Dream alive.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this legislation to support the crucial role small businesses play as drivers of economic growth and job creation. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. CARAVEO).

Ms. CARAVEO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member NADLER for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act. I also thank my colleagues, Congressman FINSTAD and Congressman MORAN, for working with me to run this bipartisan legislation.

Colorado has more than 600,000 small businesses owned by men and women who work hard day in and day out to provide for their families and serve our communities. Small business owners already face innumerable hurdles in pursuit of the American Dream, and burdensome regulations only add to their challenges.

The repercussions of overregulation are long lasting, impacting our economy and communities from the moment they are implemented, particularly in the Front Range and northern Colorado.

Unfortunately, the requirement for analyzing both the direct and indirect costs imposed on small businesses has often not been satisfied by various Federal agencies. That is where our bill comes in.

This bill would allow small business owners to be heard when they feel the Federal Government is imposing expensive roadblocks on them. It will shield small businesses from undue regulatory burdens and improve communication between small entities and Federal agencies.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have made it a point to engage with local small businesses directly through a series of roundtables throughout the Front Range and northern Colorado. These discussions highlighted the most pressing issues facing these small businesses, particularly the disproportionate impact excessive regulations have on their operations.

With the already razor-thin margins under which these small businesses operate, they need more of our help to thrive. As their Representative, I believe it is my duty to give a voice in Congress to our small businesses and ensure that they have a seat at the table in the regulatory process. Their views and priorities must be taken into consideration if we hope to foster a dynamic and robust economy.

Passing the Prove It Act means we can continue to support the small businesses that are driving our economy.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Representatives FINSTAD and MORAN for their work on this bipartisan legislation and for their diligent efforts to support our small businesses, and I urge my colleagues to support this effort.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS).

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act of 2024, introduced by Representative FINSTAD. In full disclosure, I am a small business owner.

The Prove It Act is an important piece of legislation that will give small business owners the ability to petition the government when an agency fails to actively account for regulations impacting their operations.

Over the past 4 years, the Biden administration has created an unbelievable amount of $1.7 trillion in new regulations. The Committee on Small Business, which I chair, conducted a thorough investigation into how it was possible to achieve this unfortunate milestone. We discovered that many agencies are treating the Regulatory Flexibility Act, a law that is supposed to protect small businesses from the most costly regulations, like a check-the-box exercise. They do not uphold the spirit of the law, which is an important check on the administrative state.

The Prove It Act would close many of the loopholes being utilized by Federal agencies and give small businesses the ability for their choice and their voice to be heard when the system fails them.

Main Street America has been dealing with many different economic headwinds. Inflation and labor shortages alone have made it a challenge for small business to survive. Out-of-control regulations are just one more obstacle that businessowners must work to overcome.

My committee held over 13 hearings where we brought in real small business owners to discuss the impact regulations had on their operations. Every one of our witnesses said that taking time to understand and comply with the new mandates prevents them from focusing on their core operations: giving service and selling product.

These small businesses are the economic engines of the country, and we must do all we can to support their continued success. The Prove It Act takes important steps in ensuring that agencies comply with the intent of the RFA and fully consider small businesses in the rulemaking process.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7198.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, over 200 labor, consumer protection, and environmental organizations oppose H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of opposition from the Coalition

for Sensible Safeguards, Earthjustice, and Public Citizen.

COALITION FOR
SENSIBLE SAFEGUARDS,
December 4, 2024.

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
REPRESENTATIVE HAKEEM JEFFRIES,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER JOHNSON AND DEMOCRATIC LEADER JEFFRIES: The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards (CSS), an alliance of over 200 labor, scientific, research, good government, faith, community, health, environmental, and public interest groups, is writing regarding the House of Representatives' consideration of the Prove It Act of 2024, H.R. 7198 which CSS strongly opposes.

The Prove It Act would expand the authority of the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy while failing to address fundamental flaws of the Regulatory Flexibility Act. This bill would slow down the regulatory process and empower an office that has been neither appropriately focused on small business concerns nor adequately transparent in how it conducts its actions.

The ostensible purpose of the Regulatory Flexibility Act is to ensure that small businesses continue to play a role in the U.S. economy. In practice, though, the implementation of the Regulatory Flexibility Act has failed to achieve this basic purpose, as it has instead been wielded as a blunt weapon to weaken regulatory requirements for firms of all sizes, often at the behest of large corporations and the trade associations they dominate.

The result is that protections of public health, safety, and the environment have been sacrificed without substantially improving the competitive position of small businesses in their respective industrial sectors relative to that of larger firms. These flaws are most apparent in the Regulatory Flexibility Act's burdensome analytical requirements, which are designed to weaken regulatory safeguards rather than promote small business competitiveness. H.R. 7198 does not fix this basic problem, however. Instead, it would expand those analytical requirements and make them more onerous.

The Prove It Act would enhance the authority of the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy in harmful ways. H.R. 7198, in Section 2(a)(3), would allow for endless petitions from ''Any small entity, group of small entities, or organization representing the interests of small entities'' that challenge a rulemaking agency's certification that its rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. In many cases, these petitions would trigger burdensome hearings conducted by the Chief Counsel for the Office of Advocacy, after which the Chief Counsel could then force the rulemaking agency to retract the certification and instead perform the full suite of burdensome analyses mandated by the Regulatory Flexibility Act. The bill also provides for expanded judicial review opportunities against agency certifications, which would further tie up rulemakings in wasteful and time-consuming litigation.

We urge members of the House of Representatives to consider reforms that would instead place greater constraints on the Office of Advocacy to ensure that it is actually helping, rather than harming, small businesses. A scathing 2014 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found significant deficiencies in the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy's compliance with its own internal procedures when it intervenes in regulatory actions or engages in commissioning research on regulatory costs to small businesses. Of greatest relevance, GAO found that: (1) the Office had no policies dictating when individual staff should intervene in individual rulemakings, making it susceptible to improper industry influence; and (2) the Office repeatedly cited small business input in its regulatory comments but could provide no evidence or documentation supporting this input.

Evidence has also demonstrated the extent to which the Office of Advocacy has been captured by regulated industry. The Office has often worked with large trade associations to weaken rules in ways that benefit large businesses, at the expense of small ones. These interventions have the effect of harming small businesses, contrary to the Office's statutory mission. Nevertheless, this bill would give the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy even greater authority to intervene in and block agency rules.

Additionally, the Prove It Act would further delay needed regulatory actions—causing real harm to public health and safety and the environment—without improving the quality of agency decision-making. Numerous studies have demonstrated how existing regulatory analyses, and procedural requirements contribute to extensive delays of agency rulemaking. These studies confirm that existing Regulatory Flexibility Act requirements are among the biggest contributors to these delays. By creating new analytical and procedural requirements, this bill would only worsen those delays. These additional delays are unjustifiable because they do not result in better regulatory decisions.

Finally, the bill would empower the federal judiciary to block regulations by making agency compliance with its new analytical and procedural requirements judicially reviewable. This would provide judges with an additional new tool for blocking needed public protections.

Providing the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy with more authority to block, delay, or weaken new regulatory safeguards, without enacting the significant reforms recommended by GAO and others, will leave the public even more at risk to health, safety, and economic security threats. The numerous petitions, time-consuming hearings, and expanded judicial review that this legislation would allow will thwart needed protections while failing to help small businesses with better designed regulations.

CSS urges the House of Representatives to oppose the Prove It Act and encourages the Committee to evaluate proposals that offer real and meaningful reforms to strengthen the regulatory process, such as H.R. 1507, the Stop Corporate Capture Act.

We hope to work with the House of Representatives to ensure that our regulatory process is working effectively and efficiently to protect the American public.

We strongly urge opposition to the Prove It Act of 2024, H.R. 7198.

Sincerely,

RACHEL WEINTRAUB,
Executive Director, Coalition for Sensible Safeguards.

EARTHJUSTICE,
Washington, DC, November 26, 2024.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. HAKEEM JEFFRIES,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER JOHNSON AND LEADER JEFFRIES: On behalf of Earthjustice, I strongly urge you to oppose H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act, which would further a dangerous deregulatory agenda to restrict federal agencies from protecting our environment, health, safety, workforce, and civil rights.

The Prove It Act is an unnecessary deregulatory legislative proposal that seeks to address a problem already addressed by existing Federal law. Proponents of the bill believe small businesses are not allowed enough opportunities to engage directly with agencies to impact the policies, ultimately limiting and hindering their ability to conduct business, create jobs, and compete with larger corporations. The narrative that the rulemaking process leaves small businesses little to no opportunity to address potential economic impacts and engage directly is inaccurate and perpetuates dangerous deregulatory propaganda.

Despite being debilitating underfunding, Agencies are charged with complying with overarching federal requirements that consider impacts on all industries, including small businesses. Agencies, when proposing new rules, are legally bound by the constraints of the authorizing statute passed by Congress, the Administrative Procedure Act, providing appropriate notice and comment opportunities to the public, listening to the public and regulated entities (including small businesses), and carefully reviewing all submitted comments. Small businesses are provided multiple avenues to engage in the rulemaking process and compliance resources through state and federal government offices, including the US Small Business Administration. Businesses can use the Office of Advocacy and the Office of the National Ombudsman within the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to address compliance concerns, make regulatory reform recommendations, and handle enforcement issues.

H.R. 7198 is a tool to help polluting corporations limit their compliance responsibilities and unfairly shift the cost of business to the public. Like other past attempts, this bill seeks to expand the scope of authority of the Regulatory Flexibility Act, which would increase unnecessary and lengthy regulatory delays and encourage costly litigation. The Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) already requires agencies to consider alternatives to proposed regulations to limit economic burdens to small entities while still achieving the desired regulatory goals. Agencies must conduct initial regulatory flexibility analysis, assessing potential impacts on small entities and consider the feedback provided by small entities during the rulemaking process. This bill would cost additional resources and time by allowing small entities to require duplicative regulatory analysis to rules they would rather not comply with.

Most concerning are the provisions of H.R. 7198, which allow any small entity or organization representing a small entity to petition the Chief Counsel of Advocacy for the Small Business Administration to direct any agency to adopt a new determination of the economic impact on small businesses. If the agency does not do so or ''in any other way fails to assist the Chief Counsel,'' the rule will be ineffective and invalidated for all small entities.

Regulations are vital to the public and small businesses, yielding many benefits that outweigh the costs. H.R. 7198 act seeks to delay these public protections at the detriment of the environment and the public, yielding health and environmental benefits for all who live here. While regulations are associated with compliance costs and administrative burdens, they can also provide significant benefits to small businesses, including but not limited to bolstering consumer confidence in their products and services,

leveraging the playing field by setting standards all must meet, including larger competitors and preventing monopolies or unsafe work environments, access to certain kinds of federal contacts, and limiting legal liabilities related to workplace safety or product safety issues.

For all the reasons stated above, H.R. 7198 should be opposed.

Thank you for your consideration.

BRIELLE L. GREEN,
Senior Legislative Counsel,
Earthjustice.

PUBLIC CITIZEN
Washington, DC; December 4, 2024.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. HAKEEM JEFFRIES,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER JOHNSON AND DEMOCRATIC LEADER JEFFRIES: On Thursday, December 5, the House of Representatives will be considering the Prove it Act of 2024, H.R. 7198. While Public Citizen opposes H.R. 7198, this letter does not focus on Public Citizen's concerns regarding that bill which are outlined in a separate letter submitted to the members of the House from the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards which Public Citizen cochairs. Instead, this letter is intended to provide information that we believe will help assess the current Administration's compliance with the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) as compared to prior Administrations. As the government data we cite below shows, the current Administration has complied with the RFA to a far greater degree than the previous Administration. Thus, any claims that the current Administration is not complying with the RFA are not supported, and in fact contradicted, by the government data we are sharing with members of the House.

One of the most telling indications whether an Administration is in compliance with the RFA comes from the number of so-called ''SBREFA'' panels that an Administration has conducted as compared to previous Administrations. Under the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA), three agencies, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) are required to conduct small business review panels prior to proposing regulations that will have a ''significant impact on a substantial number of small entities.'' The Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy (SBA Advocacy) plays a central role in identifying small businesses to serve on the panel and collect their feedback. SBREFA amended the RFA to require these panels in order to provide small businesses an opportunity to express concerns to these three agencies when one of their regulations significantly impacts small businesses. To be clear, these three agencies have put in place regulations that have been among the most beneficial in protecting the public.

Our analysis of the number of SBREFA panels that occurred from the Obama Administration through the current Administration reveals a clear pattern of robust compliance with the RFA under the Obama and Biden Administrations with the opposite being the case under the Trump Administration. According to data from SBA Advocacy's website, there were a total of 31 SBREFA panels completed under the Obama Administration. By contrast, there were a total of only 3 SBREFA panels completed under the entire Trump Administration. Under the current Administration, there have already been 22 SBREFA panels completed. Thus, the three agencies subject to SBREFA completed a total of 53 panels during the Obama and Biden Administrations, but only 3 panels during the Trump Administration.

Such a significant disparity in the number of SBREFA panels under the current and previous two Administrations should be concerning to the Committee as it gives the strong appearance that the SBREFA panel process is hardly neutral but rather is one-sided in practice by only seeking feedback from small businesses when the three agencies subject to SBREFA promulgate new regulatory protections but not when those regulatory protections are rolled back. The Committee should ensure that when small businesses face a less stable regulatory environment and more regulatory uncertainty due to regulatory rollbacks, the SBREFA panel process is reflecting those concerns as intended.

Additionally, Public Citizen urges Congress to conduct robust oversight of SBA Advocacy due to longstanding concerns that Advocacy has ignored certain small business viewpoints, namely those that support federal regulations, while favoring other small business viewpoints, namely those that oppose federal regulations, in an unbalanced and asymmetric fashion. While claiming to be ''independent,'' there is considerable evidence that Advocacy is in reality acting in a partisan and ideological manner by consistently scrutinizing and expressing concerns about new federal regulations that protect the public while doing the opposite when those regulations are rolled back. Certainly, the data regarding the number of SBREFA panels across recent Administrations strongly supports the need for oversight from the Committee.

We hope members of the House of Representatives will find this information helpful as it assesses claims regarding the current Administration's compliance with the RFA and considers H.R. 7198 predicated on the false belief that the current Administration is failing to comply with the RFA. Public Citizen stands ready to assist Congress in any potential oversight of agency compliance with the RFA and whether SBA Advocacy is properly carrying out its responsibilities under the RFA in a neutral and unbiased fashion.

Sincerely,

LISA GILBERT,
Co-President, Public Citizen.

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

Mr. LANDSMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the bill, not because I don't want to see a whole host of reforms as it relates to helping our small businesses but because it does not exclude the big corporations from exploiting this bill to seize more and more of our power and wealth. I think people are very frustrated with just how much wealth and power has been consolidated among a sliver of Americans and a few big corporations.

For that reason, at the appropriate time, I will offer a motion to recommit this bill back to committee. If the House rules permitted, I would have offered this motion as an amendment to focus the same kind of thinking on our veterans.

As part of the VA Committee and working with our veterans and our VA back home, I have become increasingly frustrated with the layers of bureaucracy that slow down care for our veterans or prevent care for our veterans. My amendment would provide an exemption to this bill for rules that are determined to have substantial beneficial effects on veterans and veteran programs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of this amendment into the RECORD immediately prior to the vote on the motion to recommit.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LANDSMAN. Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in voting for the motion to recommit.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in favor of H.R. 7198. I will start by thanking my good friend and colleague from Minnesota, Representative BRAD FINSTAD, for his leadership with this legislation.

Small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy. They are the innovators, job creators, and backbone of our communities.

In my home State of Minnesota, small businesses account for over 99 percent of all businesses and employ more than half of all of our workforce. When small businesses succeed, America succeeds.

Unfortunately, we have seen time and time again how the Biden-Harris administration has failed to prioritize these small businesses. Instead, it has burdened them with an avalanche of costly and unnecessary regulations, leaving businessowners to navigate a maze of red tape with little regard for their challenges.

These regulations have a real and negative impact on entrepreneurs, making it harder for them to succeed and grow. It is clear: Small businesses need a stronger voice in the regulatory process.

We have the tools to stop overregulation, but those tools need to be accessible, especially for the smallest of businesses. We must provide clear and accessible pathways for small businesses to hold Federal agencies accountable for the regulations they impose.

That is why I am proud to cosponsor my fellow Minnesotan's bill. This bill gives small businesses the ability to challenge agency regulations and forces agencies to be transparent about how their regulations will affect small business owners.

By holding agencies accountable and requiring transparency, we ensure that small businesses aren't left behind when new regulations are created. This is a critical step in ensuring that any regulation created in Washington is shaped with a clear understanding of the real-world impact. By supporting this legislation, we can help small businesses thrive and continue to drive our economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 7198. Let's ensure small businesses are heard and their concerns are addressed.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Small Business.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 7198, the Prove It Act.

Part of the role of the Small Business Committee is to recognize the impact regulations have on small businesses and work to find ways to balance the shared goal of minimizing the burdens and achieving the intended effects of regulations.

Throughout our committee hearings, we have heard that agencies have been better about considering the impact of their rules on small entities since the passage of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Another tool at our disposal is the ability of advocacy to convene SBREFA panels to give small businesses an opportunity to provide input at the beginning of the rulemaking process and when it is most important.

The Office of Advocacy has been working diligently to educate and train rule-writing staff about their responsibilities, and we have seen the fruits of their labor. The analysis agencies are conducting has improved significantly.

Yet, this bill ignores the current process. Instead of strengthening it to serve the interests of small employers, the bill we are considering today would bring our rulemaking process to a grinding halt.

It will also give big corporations a powerful new tool to delay and weaken rules, causing uncertainty and harm to small employers.

By creating an unworkable quasi-judicial process within the SBA's Office of Advocacy for reviewing agency certifications, it allows any group that claims to represent small businesses to petition Advocacy to block rules that it doesn't like.

The Prove It Act also requires agencies to conduct retrospective reviews based on the indirect costs identified in the initial analysis, without recognizing that agencies may have modified the rule during the rulemaking process.

Most concerning is the broad and unchecked authority of the chief counsel to announce that a rule is no longer effective if an agency fails to conduct a retrospective review. This means a small employer that came into compliance with an existing rule could see it eliminated and then possibly reinstated sometime in the future. This is counterproductive to what my colleagues state they are trying to achieve.

□ 1300

Finally, today's bill implements another lengthy process without providing additional assistance to an under-resourced Office of Advocacy. If enacted, Advocacy will need to double its staff and, no surprise, this bill provides no additional resources.

CBO estimates that agencies and Advocacy will need an additional $40 million over the next 5 years to implement this act, and that doesn't include the $17 million added to the Federal deficit.

Small employers need certainty, and this bill fails to provide it. It would only serve to cause undue chaos and confusion while achieving very little to help and support our Nation's small employers. That is why I urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ELLZEY).

Mr. ELLZEY. Mr. Speaker, small businesses have been hit hard in the last 4 years by rising costs, supply chain problems, and heavy regulations. These businesses, which make up a large part of America's economy, often bear the brunt of new Federal rules and regulations implemented by the Biden administration.

The Prove It Act, H.R. 7198, is designed to help small businesses push back when Federal agencies don't follow the rules laid out in the Regulatory Flexibility Act, or the RFA.

This bill gives small businesses the power to challenge proposed regulations if an agency hasn't fully or accurately considered how those rules would affect them. It also requires agencies to consider indirect costs when conducting a regulatory flexibility analysis, publish any follow-up guidance to the rule online, and periodically review the rule to ensure it still makes sense. If the agency does not adhere to these requirements, small entities are exempt from complying with the rule. It is about time.

While agencies are already required by the RFA to do this type of analysis, they are not required to make it public. The Prove It Act changes that, adding transparency and accountability to the process. If they are doing this analysis correctly, then there should be very little additional burden and no concern in making it public.

This legislation gives small businesses a greater say in the regulatory process and will help ensure that agencies do their due diligence when considering how harmful their regulations are to Main Street.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, the Prove It Act is just the latest in a long line of Republican bills meant to undermine or block agency rulemaking. If this legislation is enacted, every single rule—past, present, and future—would be funneled for review through a single official in a chronically underfunded office within the Small Business Administration. This one person would be granted unreviewable and unilateral power to block or suspend lifesaving regulations that ensure that we have clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, and safe food to eat.

I urge Members to oppose this dangerous legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

There are several points that I think need to be made in relation to this bill, but also to the obvious misunderstanding not only of what the bill does but of the rulemaking process and procedure that occurs under the Administrative Procedure Act in this country right now.

First of all, it applies to small businesses, not large businesses. By definition, it applies to small businesses. The allegation that this is going to somehow help these huge corporations is absolutely incorrect.

In addition to which, the Prove It Act does not authorize the SBA to review the substantive policy of any particular regulation. Again, any allegation that this would allow the SBA to address the substantive aspect of a regulation is again incorrect. If the agency has complied with the RFA, then the regulation will apply to small businesses as normal.

Here is something that I think is important. We often talk in the abstract about regulations and the regulatory impacts and regulatory agencies and unelected bureaucrats. Let's just talk about a real-life situation for once. Let's talk about what really happens when a regulation is adopted by an agency and the impact that it has on our small businesses.

Let's use the USDA EID rule as an example. On November 5, the U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a rule mandating electronic identification ear tags on cattle and bison. It will place a substantial burden on small ranchers when it goes into effect.

The USDA, however, in assessing this rule, only completed a brief, two-page initial regulatory flexibility analysis, finding that using the Small Business Administration's guidelines that the majority of cattle operations in the United States are considered small. In other words, the majority of our ranching operations are considered small businesses.

In 2013, when the USDA first considered imposing a rule like this, they estimated that the cost would be between $1.2 and $1.9 billion imposed against our small ranchers, yet in this latest analysis, they did a two-page RFA analysis. I can't imagine that anyone on the other side of the aisle would actually believe that that is adequate considering the circumstances and the fact that so many of our ranchers will be financially broken by such a rule.

After acknowledging that the proposed rule would have a substantial impact on small businesses, the agency then conducted an insufficient analysis based upon outdated and incorrect information. This entire analysis relies on a cost estimate created by APHIS.

This estimate undervalues the cost to ranchers, and it has not even publicly disclosed how it calculated those costs.

This example of avoiding the RFA requirements resulted in the USDA ignoring the true cost of the rule and how the burden is shouldered by our small businesses.

The USDA and the ear-tag manufacturers are also wholly unprepared to alleviate the harm caused by the rule. In fact, many States have run out of the ear tags before even being able to provide them to the ranchers.

Under the Prove It Act, the USDA would be required to account for the additional, reasonably foreseeable indirect costs that are borne by ranchers because of this rule, costs that the USDA is currently ignoring.

The Prove It Act would give a voice to the ranchers and the organizations that represent them to point out the obvious flaws in APHIS's proposals, flaws which were ignored during the finalization of the rule.

I think it is also incredibly important to understand that we are passing this bill today to help small businesses understand the true cost of compliance with regulations and to force regulators to be transparent when crafting their regulations.

If this bill becomes law, regulators will have to come to terms with the enormous weight that they place on small businesses in the form of regulations. In fact, under the Biden-Harris administration, the regulatory burden in this country is approximately $2.1 trillion a year. It is almost $16,000 per household.

I cannot understand, for the life of me, why anyone on the other side of the aisle would not want the agencies to have to disclose the real cost of these regulations. Maybe it is because they don't want the American public to understand the costs imposed by unelected bureaucrats. In an ideal world, regulators would think twice before imposing massive costs on our small businesses that are the lifeblood of so many of our communities.

I also want to point out that the claim that this would slow down rulemaking is absolutely absurd. The Prove It Act is designed to ensure that agencies are complying with existing law, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, when they are crafting their regulations. Agencies must already comply with the RFA's requirements. They are just not doing it, and this is a law that would force them to meet that requirement.

The RFA has been the law since 1980. Why are we allowing these agencies to get away with ignoring the law as written by Congress?

No agency can credibly claim that compliance with the RFA, which Congress enacted, improperly slows down the rulemaking process.

I also want to point out the comment that this would result in a bottleneck created by these large corporations filing petition after petition after petition. Again, that argument is absurd. The claim that small businesses, large businesses, or trade associations would abuse the Prove It Act's petition mechanism is just simply misguided.

The Prove It Act gives a method for the chief counsel for advocacy at the Small Business Administration to dismiss any petition that lacks merit. Following an initial review, the chief counsel can close the petition without any further action if the case does not warrant it.

To be clear, big businesses are not allowed to petition the SBA under the Prove It Act. I would like to repeat that. Big businesses are not covered by this act.

Finally, the CBO score. The CBO score for this bill is clearly wrong. The generic language that the CBO cites does not remotely support its finding that this bill will increase the deficit. CBO claims that direct spending would increase by $10 million, and Congress would need to appropriate an extra $35 million to Federal agencies for them to do much of the same work that they were supposed to be doing for the last 40 years.

Every Federal agency that engages in rulemaking should already have the staff and resources on board to comply with the law. The Prove It Act simply requires the already existing staff perform some additional analyses to report on the reasonably foreseeable indirect costs of their regulations. This should be relatively straightforward for the personnel already tasked with the RFA analysis.

Finally, any agency that is burdened by the Prove It Act's requirements probably did not comply with the RFA in the first place.

One of the things that I find so interesting in these debates about our efforts to force transparency and good government provisions on our agencies is often this discussion that it is going to destroy the air and water, we are going to have sick kids, the toys are going to be destroyed, and everything is going to be dangerous. That is absolutely absurd, and it is a red herring.

There is nothing wrong with requiring our agencies to be transparent and up-front about the costs that they are imposing on our businesses when they adopt regulations. I am actually surprised that anyone would oppose the Prove It Act in light of what it is intended to do.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate on the bill has expired.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. VELÁZQUEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 118–791.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Prove It Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. TRAINING ON COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS OF THE REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT.

Section 612 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking ''**and intervention rights**'' and inserting ''**, intervention rights, and training**''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) Not less frequently than once every 4 years, the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration shall provide training on compliance with the requirements of this chapter for any agency employee who writes, reviews, approves, or analyzes regulations or guidance documents.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1602, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by reiterating that as the ranking member of the Small Business Committee, I recognize the impact of regulations, and I have worked to find ways to balance the shared goal of minimizing the burdens while achieving the intended effects of regulations.

The Prove It Act doesn't strike that appropriate balance. It allows big corporations to block, delay, and weaken rules. Yes, the Chamber of Commerce or NFIB could file a petition and doesn't have to identify the business that they are representing, causing uncertainty and harm to small employers. It also gives unchecked authority to the SBA's chief counsel and tasks an understaffed and under-resourced Office of Advocacy with a cumbersome and lengthy review process.

That is why I am offering a commonsense solution. My amendment will require the Office of Advocacy to train agencies on how to comply with their Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Key personnel at every rule-writing agency would be required to undergo RFA training once every 4 years. We have heard from Advocacy that when agencies have a better understanding of the RFA, it leads to more meaningful consideration of small businesses throughout the rulemaking process. Advocacy has been working diligently to train staff, and we have seen the fruits of their labor year after year.

Their training programs have made a significant difference in the rule-writing process, and requiring ongoing training will only lead to more success. Agencies have shared draft documents with Advocacy early in the rulemaking process, and Advocacy has worked to help agencies obtain reliable small business data. Their training program has led to much better analysis, and in many instances enhanced the factual basis for agency certifications or led to modifications to reduce the impact to small firms.

Mr. Speaker, we need to foster a constructive working relationship between

Advocacy and Federal agencies rather than create an adversarial one. This amendment will ensure that Advocacy reaches all agencies on RFA compliance on a regular basis.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support my amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1315

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

This amendment simply strikes the entire bill and replaces it with a training mandate. Claiming that training is all that is necessary to help agencies comply with their obligations under the RFA completely ignores the problems that the Prove It Act is going to solve.

The Small Business Administration already offers training sessions for regulators and has done so for over 20 years. According to the SBA, they held nine training sessions and trained 139 Federal officials in 2023 alone.

Further, the SBA has already trained personnel at nearly every Federal agency and department since 2003. Despite this training, however, in 2023, SBA sent 46 letters to agencies across government outlining the deficiencies in their RFA analysis. In 30 cases, the SBA found that agencies conducted inadequate analysis of small business impacts.

What this means is that during the rulemaking process for 30 rules, agencies did not comply with already existing law despite the SBA training they likely received.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, there are a few more points I would like to make.

Despite SBA's best efforts to help agencies comply with their obligations under the RFA, those efforts are being ignored. Agencies have had 40 years to develop the experience and expertise necessary to comply with the Regulatory Flexibility Act and still regularly come up short.

The claim that training is the answer is simply an attempt to distract from the importance of the Prove It Act. If we adopt this amendment and training is mandated instead of adopting the Prove It Act's provisions, nothing will change. Small businesses around the country will still be harmed by regulatory agencies blatantly ignoring their obligations under the RFA and discounting the costs of regulations.

The only legitimate solution is to adopt the Prove It Act, which strengthens the RFA and creates mechanisms to force regulatory agencies to comply with the law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RULLI). Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the bill and on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. 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 will be 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.

SWANSON AND HUGH BUTLER RESERVOIRS LAND CONVEYANCES ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8413) to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land at Swanson Reservoir and Hugh Butler Reservoir in the State of Nebraska, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8413

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Swanson and Hugh Butler Reservoirs Land Conveyances Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) FAIR MARKET VALUE.—The term ''fair market value'', with respect to a specified property right, means the most probable price, as of a specified date, in cash, terms equivalent to cash, or other precisely revealed terms, for which the specified property right should sell after reasonable exposure in a competitive market under all conditions requisite for a fair sale, with the buyer and seller each acting prudently, knowledgeably, and in the self-interest of the buyer or seller, as applicable, and assuming that the buyer and seller are not under undue duress.

(2) FRONTIER COUNTY.—The term ''Frontier County'' means Frontier County, Nebraska, acting through the Board of Commissioners of Frontier County.

(3) HITCHCOCK COUNTY.—The term ''Hitchcock County'' means Hitchcock County, Nebraska, acting through the Board of Commissioners of Hitchcock County.

(4) HUGH BUTLER RESERVOIR.—The term ''Hugh Butler Reservoir'' means the Hugh Butler Lake and Red Willow Dam constructed as part of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, Frenchman-Cambridge Division, as authorized by section 9 of the Act of December 22, 1944 (commonly known as the ''Flood Control Act of 1944'') (58 Stat. 891, chapter 665).

(5) LAKEVIEW LODGE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT.—The term ''Lakeview Lodge Management Agreement'' means the management agreement entitled ''Management Agreement between the Bureau of Reclamation, et al., for the Development, Operation, and Maintenance of a Concession Operation at Swanson Reservoir, Nebraska'', numbered 23–LM–60–4160, and dated November 1, 2023.

(6) LAKEVIEW LODGE PERMITTED CONCESSION LAND.—The term ''Lakeview Lodge Permitted Concession Land'' means the approximately 21.5 acres of land and water for the operation of a public concession at Swanson Reservoir, as generally depicted on the map prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation entitled ''Lakeview Lodge Concession Boundary'' and dated August 2023.

(7) RED WILLOW MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT.—The term ''Red Willow Management Agreement'' means the management agreement entitled ''Management Agreement between the Bureau of Reclamation, et al., for the Development, Management, Operation, and Maintenance of a Concession Operation at Hugh Butler Reservoir, Nebraska'', numbered 24–LM–60–5155, and dated March 7, 2024.

(8) RED WILLOW PERMITTED CABIN LAND.—The term ''Red Willow Permitted Cabin Land'' means the approximately 6.5 acres of land encompassing the 8 permitted cabin lots at the Hugh Butler Reservoir, as generally depicted on the map prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation entitled ''Red Willow Cabin Map'' and dated March 2024.

(9) RED WILLOW PERMITTED CONCESSION LAND.—The term ''Red Willow Permitted Concession Land'' means the approximately 23 acres of land and water for the operation of a public service concession at the Hugh Butler Reservoir, as generally depicted on the map prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation entitled ''Red Willow Concession Boundary'' and dated August 2023.

(10) REQUESTED FEDERAL LAND.—The term ''requested Federal land'' means each of the following parcels of land, or any subset of those parcels, with respect to which a title transfer agreement is executed:

(A) The Lakeview Lodge Permitted Concession Land.

(B) The Red Willow Permitted Cabin Land.

(C) The Red Willow Permitted Concession Land.

(D) The Swanson Permitted Cabin Land.

(E) The Swanson Permitted Concession Land.

(11) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Commissioner of Reclamation.

(12) STATE.—The term ''State'' means the State of Nebraska.

(13) SWANSON MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT.—The term ''Swanson Management Agreement'' means the management agreement entitled ''Management Agreement between the Bureau of Reclamation, et al., for the Development, Management, Operation, and Maintenance of a Concession Operation at Swanson Reservoir, Nebraska'', numbered 24–LM–60–5154, and dated April 19, 2024.

(14) SWANSON PERMITTED CABIN LAND.—The term ''Swanson Permitted Cabin Land'' means the approximately 6.2 acres of land encompassing the 11 permitted cabin lots at the Swanson Reservoir, as generally depicted on the map prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation entitled ''Swanson Cabin Map'' and dated March 2024.

(15) SWANSON PERMITTED CONCESSION LAND.—The term ''Swanson Permitted Concession Land'' means the approximately 20 acres of land and water for the operation of

a public service concession at the Swanson Reservoir, as generally depicted on the map prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation entitled ''Swanson Concession Boundary'' and dated August 2023.

(16) SWANSON RESERVOIR.—The term ''Swanson Reservoir'' means the Swanson Reservoir and Trenton Dam constructed as part of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, Frenchman-Cambridge Division, as authorized by section 9 of the Act of December 22, 1944 (commonly known as the ''Flood Control Act of 1944'') (58 Stat. 891, chapter 665).

(17) TITLE TRANSFER AGREEMENT.—The term ''title transfer agreement'' means a title transfer agreement entered into under section 3(a)(1) between the Secretary and Frontier County or Hitchcock County, as applicable, that establishes the legal, institutional, and financial terms for the conveyance of the applicable requested Federal land.

SEC. 3. CONVEYANCES OF FEDERAL LAND TO HITCHCOCK COUNTY AND FRONTIER COUNTY, NEBRASKA.

(a) CONVEYANCES TO HITCHCOCK COUNTY AND FRONTIER COUNTY.—

(1) TITLE TRANSFER AGREEMENT.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (5) and sections 4 and 5, not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall make good faith efforts to enter into negotiations for, and enter into, title transfer agreements with each of Hitchcock County and Frontier County—

(A) under which the Secretary shall convey to Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, all requested right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the applicable requested Federal land;

(B) that provides that, as a condition of the conveyance, the applicable requested Federal land—

(i) shall be conveyed in whole; and

(ii) shall not be subdivided; and

(C) that provides a plan for—

(i) a demonstration of—

(I) the technical capability of Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, to operate and maintain the applicable requested Federal land permanently; and

(II) the ability of Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, to satisfy financial obligations relating to the applicable requested Federal land; and

(ii) the management by Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, of the applicable requested Federal land to be conveyed in accordance with the applicable title transfer agreement, including addressing any issues to ensure compliance with applicable State fire, safety, and health codes and standards not later than 2 years after the date of the applicable conveyance.

(2) REQUIREMENT.—Notwithstanding section 8002(3)(B) of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (43 U.S.C. 2902(3)(B)), the Secretary shall negotiate the title transfer agreement under paragraph (1) in accordance with the criteria, terms, and conditions described in subtitle A of title VIII of that Act (43 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.).

(3) OFFER TO CONVEY.—As soon as practicable after the date on which a title transfer agreement is entered into pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary shall offer to convey to Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the applicable requested Federal land, in accordance with the terms and conditions described in the applicable title transfer agreement.

(4) COSTS.—

(A) CONSIDERATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—As consideration for the conveyance of the applicable requested Federal land under paragraph (3), Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, shall pay to the Secretary, for use in accordance with clause (iii), an amount equal to the fair market value of the applicable requested Federal land, as determined by an appraisal conducted—

(I) in accordance with clause (ii);

(II) by a third-party appraiser approved by the Secretary; and

(III) subject to the management requirements under paragraph (5) and section 4.

(ii) APPRAISAL REQUIREMENTS.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—An appraisal under clause (i) shall be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice.

(II) IMPROVEMENTS.—For purposes of clause (i), any improvements to the applicable requested Federal land made by a permit holder shall not be included in the appraised value of the applicable requested Federal land.

(III) RESOLUTION OF DISPUTE.—Any dispute over the fair market value of the applicable requested Federal land under an appraisal conducted under clause (i) shall be resolved in accordance with section 2201.4 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).

(IV) CONSIDERATION OF REVENUES.—An appraisal under clause (i) shall take into consideration any future income stream that the United States would have derived from the applicable requested Federal land at the time of the conveyance, including revenues to the United States—

(aa) from existing water service and repayment contracts;

(bb) from known or reasonably foreseeable new contracts or renewals;

(cc) as aid to irrigation; and

(dd) from any other authorized source.

(iii) USE.—Amounts paid under clause (i) shall be available to the Secretary, subject to further appropriation, for activities relating to the operation of the Hugh Butler Reservoir and Swanson Reservoir.

(B) CONVEYANCE COSTS.—As a condition of a conveyance under paragraph (3), Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, shall be responsible for paying, in advance of the conveyance of the applicable requested Federal land, all survey and other administrative costs, as determined to be necessary by the Secretary, for the preparation and completion of transfer of title to, the applicable requested Federal land.

(5) MANAGEMENT.—Hitchcock County and Frontier County shall each manage the applicable requested Federal land conveyed to Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, under paragraph (3)—

(A) for substantially the same purposes for which the applicable requested Federal land is being used as of the date of enactment of this Act; or

(B) for—

(i) recreation and public purposes consistent with the Act of June 14, 1926 (commonly known as the ''Recreation and Public Purposes Act'') (44 Stat. 741, chapter 578; 43 U.S.C. 869 et seq.);

(ii) public access;

(iii) fish and wildlife habitat; or

(iv) the preservation of the natural character of the applicable requested Federal land.

(b) SUBSEQUENT CONVEYANCE OF REQUESTED FEDERAL LAND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), on completion of a conveyance to Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, of the applicable requested Federal land under subsection (a), Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, may not subsequently reconvey the applicable requested Federal land.

(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, may subsequently convey the applicable requested Federal land if—

(A) the applicable requested Federal land is reconveyed, at no cost, to an entity located in the State that is recognized by the State as a publicly owned or governmental organization, including—

(i) a State agency;

(ii) a county, city, village, or township in, or political subdivision of, the State;

(iii) a natural resource district; and

(iv) an irrigation or reclamation district;

(B) Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, has demonstrated an impending adverse impact if the applicable requested Federal land is not reconveyed;

(C) the entity to which the applicable requested Federal land would be reconveyed has the capacity to continue to manage the applicable requested Federal land for the same purposes for which the applicable requested Federal land has been managed as of the date of enactment of this Act; and

(D) the applicable requested Federal land to be reconveyed would continue to be available for public access.

(3) FUTURE CONVEYANCES.—A subsequent conveyance of requested Federal land shall be subject to the requirements of this subsection and subsection (a)(5).

SEC. 4. EFFECT ON RESERVATIONS, EASEMENTS, AND OTHER RIGHTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—A conveyance under section 3(a) shall be subject to—

(1) valid existing rights;

(2) operational requirements of the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin Program authorized by section 9 of the Act of December 22, 1944 (commonly known as the ''Flood Control Act of 1944'') (58 Stat. 891, chapter 665), including Swanson Reservoir and Hugh Butler Reservoir;

(3) any flowage easement reserved by the United States to allow full operation of the Swanson Reservoir and Hugh Butler Reservoir, as applicable, for authorized purposes;

(4) any applicable reservations described in the Lakeview Lodge Management Agreement, Red Willow Management Agreement, or Swanson Management Agreement, as applicable;

(5) oil, gas, and other mineral rights reserved of record, as of the date of enactment of this Act, by, or in favor of, the United States or a third party;

(6) any permit, license, lease, right-of-use, flowage easement, or right-of-way of record in, on, over, or across the applicable requested Federal land, whether owned by the United States or a third party, as of the date of enactment of this Act;

(7) as applicable, a deed restriction that prohibits building any new permanent structure on the applicable requested Federal land below an elevation of—

(A) 2,785 feet at Swanson Reservoir; or

(B) 2,628 feet at Hugh Butler Reservoir; and

(8) the granting of applicable easements for—

(A) vehicular access to the applicable requested Federal land; and

(B) access to, and use of, all docks, boathouses, ramps, retaining walls, and other improvements for which access is provided in a permit for the use of the applicable requested Federal land as of the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) LIABILITY; TAKING.—

(1) LIABILITY.—The United States shall not be liable for flood damage to a property, Hitchcock County, or Frontier County, or for damages arising out of any act, omission, or occurrence relating to a permit holder, Hitchcock County, or Frontier County, other

than for damages caused by an act or omission of the United States or an employee, agent, or contractor of the United States before the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) HOLD HARMLESS.—Hitchcock County, Frontier County, and any entity to which requested Federal land is subsequently conveyed pursuant to section 3(b)(2) shall agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Unites States for all claims by Hitchcock County, Frontier County, or others arising from—

(A) the design, construction, operation, maintenance, or replacement of Red Willow Dam, Hugh Butler Reservoir, Trenton Dam, or Swanson Reservoir;

(B) the survey of claims, description of claims, delineation of boundaries, conveyance documents, conveyance process, and recording of deeds associated with a conveyance under this Act; or

(C) any damages associated with a structure or land that may be displaced in a flood event.

(3) NO ADDITIONAL LIABILITY.—Nothing in this Act increases the liability of the United States beyond the liability provided under chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Federal Tort Claims Act'').

(4) TAKING.—Any temporary flooding or flood damage to a property, Hitchcock County, or Frontier County, shall not be considered to be a taking by the United States.

SEC. 5. INTERIM REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—During the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date that is the later of the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act or the date of conveyance of the applicable requested Federal land under section 3(a), the provisions of the Lakeview Lodge Management Agreement, Red Willow Management Agreement, and Swanson Management Agreement, as applicable, and any applicable permits, shall remain in force and effect.

(b) EFFECT OF FAILURE TO ENTER INTO TITLE TRANSFER AGREEMENT.—If, by the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, Hitchcock County or Frontier County, as applicable, have not entered into a title transfer agreement with the Secretary under section 3(a)(1), the Secretary shall manage any of the Lakeview Lodge Permitted Concession Land, the Red Willow Permitted Cabin Land, the Red Willow Permitted Concession Land, the Swanson Permitted Cabin Land, and the Swanson Permitted Concession Land, as applicable, that is not subject to a title transfer agreement in accordance with applicable law.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. 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 on H.R. 8413, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Representative SMITH's legislation, which would initiate a transfer of Federal lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Reclamation to the Counties of Frontier and Hitchcock in southern Nebraska.

This legislation was introduced at the counties' request with the hopes of gaining local control after disagreements arose between local stakeholders and the Bureau of Reclamation.

The disagreement stemmed from the Bureau of Reclamation's decision to require the removal of mobile homes surrounding the reservoirs, an action that would significantly impact the local economy.

The cost of this transfer has not yet been determined. However, an appraisal will be conducted, and the counties will be responsible for providing fair market value compensation for these lands.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Swanson and Hugh Butler Reservoirs Land Conveyances Act. This bill would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to enter into good faith negotiations with Hitchcock County and Frontier County in southern Nebraska to establish a title transfer agreement for certain lands within the Swanson Reservoir and Red Willow Reservoir lands.

The Swanson Reservoir and Hugh Butler Reservoir serve as home to several communities and popular recreation sites. Transferring ownership of these lands from the Bureau of Reclamation to the counties will allow the counties to manage and develop the land for recreational use and conservation in alignment with the communities' needs.

It is worth noting that there are some health and safety concerns at the concession areas that need to be met to increase public safety and access to recreation facilities.

For that reason, the bill would require that prior to any conveyance, the local entities must demonstrate their ability to effectively operate, maintain, and enhance the lands for the same purposes for which they are currently being used and to establish a concrete plan to address health and safety concerns. This legislation will help improve the management of these sites for the surrounding communities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH), the bill sponsor.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues on the House Committee on Natural Resources. I appreciate this opportunity, and I appreciate their support of H.R. 8413.

The Swanson and Hugh Butler Reservoirs Land Conveyances Act would begin the process of transferring ownership of roughly 77 acres of land from the Bureau of Reclamation to the Counties of Hitchcock and Frontier together. Importantly, this land does not include any water or power assets.

I am proud to represent Nebraska's Third District, which is home to both reservoirs impacted by this legislation. Over the last few years, working closely with impacted stakeholders, as well as Senator DEB FISCHER, it is clear how important this transfer is to the local communities.

The current management of the land supports local marinas, housing communities, and areas for local economic activity. However, should the Bureau of Reclamation maintain ownership, impending changes to land use policy would force the removal of these businesses and communities from the land.

When the Bureau of Reclamation announced the planned management changes, it spawned extensive collaboration between the local communities, businesses, and housing owners. This collaboration generated outstanding support for a land transfer that would allow for increased local control of the recreational areas.

Further, this would provide long-term certainty for the businesses that depend on revenue brought in by tourism, the locals who enjoy recreational activities at the reservoirs, and some 180 housing owners from three States. These owners and their families have spent generations creating these homes away from home.

Tourism cultivated by current land use arrangements is vital for the local economies. Both counties are highly rural, with Frontier County covering over 700 square miles with just 2,600 residents. There are three restaurants in the entire county, one of which is a marina included in this transfer.

The 110 leaseholders at Swanson Reservoir bring in approximately 500 people multiple times throughout the year who support other local businesses in the area as well.

To put this into perspective, small businesses throughout Frontier and Hitchcock Counties estimate they would lose nearly $1.5 million in revenue if these leases are terminated. Additionally, the marinas facilitate community activities and drive economic development, which would not occur if not for the patronage generated from the broader communities.

When the public and the Federal Government disagree on how land intended for public access should be used, the reasonable solution is to empower local control, which best suits the local community and visitors, especially considering all the discussion here this afternoon.

Additionally, the transfer comes at no cost to the Federal Government, as the legislation ensures taxpayers are reimbursed at fair market value and public access is maintained.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chair and ranking member for their work to move this bill forward and certainly Senator FISCHER for her partnership in the Senate, and I urge passage of H.R. 8413.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 8413 provides a solution to a dispute between Frontier and Hitchcock Counties and the Bureau of Reclamation. These reservoirs, among other benefits, provide valuable recreational access to over 57,000 acres available for public hunting and fishing.

I thank Representative SMITH and all of Nebraska's congressional delegation members for their leadership on this issue. I encourage all Members to support this commonsense, bipartisan legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8413, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1645

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GIMENEZ) at 4 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

Motions to suspend the rules and pass:

S. 709;

H.R. 9598; and

H.R. 9600,

Amendment No. 1 to H.R. 7198 by Ms. VELÁZQUEZ of New York,

The motion to recommit H.R. 7198, if offered; and

Passage of H.R. 7198, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes or 2-minute votes.

FEDERAL AGENCY PERFORMANCE ACT OF 2024

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 709) to improve performance and accountability in the Federal Government, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. BURCHETT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 389, nays 6, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 484]

YEAS—389

Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Alford
Allen
Allred
Amo
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Auchincloss
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Balint
Banks
Barragán
Bean (FL)
Beatty
Bentz
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Bice
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NC)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle (PA)
Brecheen
Brown
Brownley
Buchanan
Bucshon
Budzinski
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Bush
Calvert
Cammack
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carey
Carl
Carson
Carter (GA)
Carter (LA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Ciscomani
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Cline
Cloud
Clyburn
Clyde
Cohen
Cole
Collins
Comer
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crawford
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davids (KS)
Davidson
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
De La Cruz
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donalds
Duarte
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Fong
Foster
Foushee
Foxx
Frankel, Lois
Franklin, Scott
Frost
Fry
Fulcher
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Gimenez
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez, V.
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Graves (LA)
Green (TN)
Green, Al (TX)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harder (CA)
Harris
Harshbarger
Hayes
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Horsford
Houchin
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson (TX)
Jacobs
James
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Kean (NJ)
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kiggans (VA)
Kildee
Kiley
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Landsman
Langworthy
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (CA)
Lee (FL)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lee Carter
Leger Fernandez
Lesko
Letlow
Levin
Lofgren
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luttrell
Lynch
Mace
Magaziner
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Manning
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCaul
McClain
McClellan
McClintock
McCollum
McCormick
McGarvey
McGovern
McIver
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Meuser
Mfume
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Moran
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Murphy
Nadler
Neal
Neguse
Nehls
Newhouse
Nickel
Norcross
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ocasio-Cortez
Ogles
Owens
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pappas
Peltola
Pence
Perry
Peters
Pettersen
Pfluger
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Posey
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Ross
Rouzer
Ruiz
Rulli
Ruppersberger
Rutherford
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scalise
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Self
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Simpson
Slotkin
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Stanton
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stevens
Strickland
Strong
Suozzi
Sykes
Takano
Tenney
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Turner
Underwood
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wagner
Walberg
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wied
Wild
Williams (GA)
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—6

Biggs
Crane
Good (VA)
Greene (GA)
Rosendale
Roy

NOT VOTING—37

Barr
Blumenauer
Boebert
Bowman
Crenshaw
Crockett
Duncan
Evans
Fletcher
Gallego
Garbarino
Garcia, Mike
Gomez
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Lieu
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Massie
McHenry
Mullin
Napolitano
Omar
Pelosi
Perez
Porter
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Salazar
Sherrill
Stansbury
Swalwell
Titus
Waltz
Wexton

□ 1713

Ms. ESCOBAR, Messrs. TIMMONS, and SMUCKER changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 484.

OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2024

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ELLZEY). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9598) to amend the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act to reauthorize such Office, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 399, nays 1, not voting 32, as follows:

[Roll No. 485]

YEAS—399

Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Alford
Allen
Allred
Amo
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Auchincloss
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Balint
Banks
Barr
Barragán
Bean (FL)
Beatty
Bentz
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NC)
Blunt Rochester
Boebert
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle (PA)
Brecheen
Brown
Brownley
Buchanan
Bucshon
Budzinski
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Bush
Calvert
Cammack
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carey
Carl
Carson
Carter (GA)
Carter (LA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Ciscomani
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Cline
Cloud
Clyburn
Clyde
Cohen
Cole
Collins
Comer
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crane
Crawford
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davids (KS)
Davidson
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
De La Cruz
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donalds
Duarte
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Fong
Foster
Foushee
Foxx
Frankel, Lois
Franklin, Scott
Frost
Fry
Fulcher
Garamendi
Garbarino
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Gimenez
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez, V.
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Graves (LA)
Green (TN)
Green, Al (TX)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harder (CA)
Harris
Harshbarger
Hayes
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Horsford
Houchin
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson (TX)
Jacobs
James
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Kean (NJ)
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kiggans (VA)
Kildee
Kiley
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Landsman
Langworthy
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (CA)
Lee (FL)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lee Carter
Leger Fernandez
Lesko
Letlow
Levin
Lofgren
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luttrell
Lynch
Mace
Magaziner
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Manning
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCaul
McClain
McClellan
McCollum
McCormick
McGarvey
McGovern
McIver
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Meuser
Mfume
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Moran
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Murphy
Nadler
Neal
Neguse
Nehls
Newhouse
Nickel
Norcross
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ocasio-Cortez
Ogles
Omar
Owens
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pappas
Pelosi
Peltola
Pence
Perry
Peters
Pettersen
Pfluger
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Posey
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Rosendale
Ross
Rouzer
Roy
Ruiz
Rulli
Ruppersberger
Rutherford
Ryan
Salazar
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scalise
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Self
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Simpson
Slotkin
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Stanton
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stevens
Strickland
Strong
Suozzi
Sykes
Takano
Tenney
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Turner
Underwood
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Walberg
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wied
Wild
Williams (GA)
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—1

McClintock

NOT VOTING—32

Blumenauer
Bowman
Crenshaw
Crockett
Duncan
Evans
Fletcher
Gallego
Garcia, Mike
Gomez
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Lieu
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Massie
McHenry
Mullin
Napolitano
Perez
Porter
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Sherrill
Smucker
Stansbury
Swalwell
Wagner
Waltz
Wexton

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1718

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

JIMMY AND ROSALYNN CARTER POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9600) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 119 Main Street in Plains, Georgia, as the ''Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Post Office'', on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 381, nays 15, answered ''present'' 2, not voting 34, as follows:

[Roll No. 486]

YEAS—381

Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Alford
Allen
Allred
Amo
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Auchincloss
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Balint
Banks
Barr
Barragán
Beatty
Bentz
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Bice
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NC)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Buchanan
Bucshon
Budzinski
Burchett
Burgess
Bush
Calvert
Cammack
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carey
Carl
Carson
Carter (GA)
Carter (LA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Ciscomani
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Cline
Cloud
Clyburn
Clyde
Cohen
Cole
Collins
Comer
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crawford
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davids (KS)
Davidson
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
De La Cruz
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donalds
Duarte
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Fong
Foster
Foushee
Foxx
Frankel, Lois
Franklin, Scott
Frost
Fry
Garamendi
Garbarino
Garcia (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Gimenez
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez, V.
Gooden (TX)
Gottheimer
Graves (LA)
Green (TN)
Green, Al (TX)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Horsford
Houchin
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson (TX)
Jacobs
James
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Kean (NJ)
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kiggans (VA)
Kildee
Kiley
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn

Landsman
Langworthy
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (CA)
Lee (FL)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lee Carter
Leger Fernandez
Lesko
Letlow
Levin
Lofgren
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luttrell
Lynch
Mace
Magaziner
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Manning
Mast
Matsui
McBath
McCaul
McClain
McClellan
McClintock
McCollum
McCormick
McGarvey
McGovern
McIver
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Meuser
Mfume
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Moran
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Murphy
Nadler
Neal
Neguse
Nehls
Newhouse
Nickel
Norcross
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Owens
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pappas
Pelosi
Peltola
Pence
Perry
Peters
Pettersen
Pfluger
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Posey
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Ross
Rouzer
Ruiz
Rulli
Ruppersberger
Rutherford
Ryan
Salazar
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scalise
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Self
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Simpson
Slotkin
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Stevens
Strickland
Strong
Suozzi
Sykes
Takano
Tenney
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Turner
Underwood
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Walberg
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wild
Williams (GA)
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (FL)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—15

Bean (FL)
Biggs
Boebert
Brecheen
Burlison
Crane
Fulcher
Good (VA)
Gosar
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Miller (IL)
Ogles
Wilson (SC)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—2

Rosendale
Roy

NOT VOTING—34

Blumenauer
Bowman
Crenshaw
Crockett
Duncan
Evans
Fletcher
Gallego
Garcia, Mike
Gomez
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Lieu
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Massie
McHenry
Mullin
Napolitano
Perez
Porter
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Sherrill
Spartz
Steube
Swalwell
Titus
Wagner
Waltz
Wexton
Wied

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1722

Ms. BOEBERT changed her vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. WIED. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 486.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 484 and YEA on Roll Call No. 486.

PROVE IT ACT OF 2024

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on amendment No. 1 to the bill, H.R. 7198, to amend title 5, United States Code, to require greater transparency for Federal regulatory decisions that impact small businesses, and for other purposes, printed in part B of House Report 118–791, offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 199, nays 204, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 487]

YEAS—199

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Amo
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gonzalez, V.
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lee Carter
Leger Fernandez
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
McIver
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pelosi
Peltola
Peters
Pettersen
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Slotkin
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wied
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)

NAYS—204

Aderholt
Alford
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brecheen
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burchett
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Caraveo
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Crane
Crawford
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davidson
De La Cruz
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duarte
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Fong
Foxx
Franklin, Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Garbarino
Gimenez
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Graves (LA)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Jackson (TX)
James
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kean (NJ)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kim (CA)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luttrell
Mace
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Mast
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McCormick
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rulli
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOT VOTING—29

Blumenauer
Bowman
Burgess
Crenshaw
Crockett
Duncan
Evans
Fletcher
Gallego
Garcia, Mike
Gomez
Granger

Graves (MO)	McHenry	Rose
Grijalva	Mullin	Sherrill
Lieu	Perez	Swalwell
Luetkemeyer	Porter	Waltz
Luna	Rodgers (WA)	Wexton
Massie	Rogers (KY)	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1727

Mr. GRIFFITH changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. WIED. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 487, I mistakenly voted YEA when I intended to vote NAY.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. LANDSMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Landsman of Ohio moves to recommit the bill H.R. 7198 to the Committee on the Judiciary.

The material previously referred to by Mr. LANDSMAN is as follows:

Mr. Landsman moves to recommit the bill H.R. 7198 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Strike all that follows after the enacting clause, and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Prove It Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. INITIAL REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ANALYSIS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 603(b)—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) except with respect to a proposed rule that the head of such agency has determined will have a substantial beneficial effect on veterans' programs, where feasible, any reasonably foreseeable potential indirect costs the proposed rule may impose on small entities, including small entities that—

''(A) purchase products or services from, sell products or services to, or otherwise conduct business with entities directly regulated by the rule;

''(B) are directly regulated by other governmental entities as a result of the rule; or

''(C) are not directly regulated by the agency as a result of the rule but are otherwise subject to other agency rules as a result of the rule.'';

(2) in section 605(b), 605(b), by adding at the end the following: ''Except with respect to a proposed rule that the head of such agency has determined will have a substantial beneficial effect on veterans' programs, the agency shall provide such certification and statement to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration not later than 10 days after completing the certification described in this subsection.''; and

(3) by inserting after section 605 the following:

''§ 605A. Review procedures relating to initial regulatory flexibility analysis certifications

''(a) FILING A PETITION TO REVIEW AGENCY CERTIFICATION OF A PROPOSED RULE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except with respect to a proposed rule that the head of the agency proposing such rule has determined will have a substantial beneficial effect on veterans' programs, any small entity, group of small entities, or organization representing the interests of small entities may petition the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration (in this section referred to as the 'Chief Counsel') to review a certification published under section 605(b) that a proposed rule will not, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

''(2) FORM.—The Chief Counsel shall—

''(A) determine the method, timing, and form of disseminating a petition described in paragraph (1); and

''(B) display the information described in subparagraph (A) on the website of the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration in a conspicuous manner.

''(3) CONTENTS.—Each petition described in paragraph (1) with respect to a certification published under section 605(b) for a proposed rule shall clearly and concisely—

''(A) specify the name of the petitioner and a telephone number, a mailing address, and an email address that the Chief Counsel may use to communicate with the petitioner;

''(B) if the petitioner is an organization, provide additional identifying information, as applicable, including the organizational or corporate status of the petitioner, the State of incorporation of the petitioner, the registered agent of the petitioner, the interest of the petitioner in representing small entities affected by the proposed rule and the certification at issue, and the name and authority of the individual who signed the petition on behalf of the organizational or corporate petitioner;

''(C) present the specific problems or issues that the petitioner believes should be addressed or considered through a review of the certification, such as—

''(i) any specific circumstances in which the determination of the certification that the proposed rule will not, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities is incorrect, incomplete, or inadequate; or

''(ii) why the proposed rule would, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities;

''(D) cite, enclose, or reference any relevant and non-protected or confidential technical, scientific, or other data or information supporting any assertion of the problems or issues with the certification;

''(E) present a proposed solution to the problems or issues raised in the petition, including potential regulatory or compliance alternatives to the proposed rule;

''(F) provide an analysis, discussion, or argument that explains how the proposed solution described in subparagraph (E) solves the problems or issues raised in the petition; and

''(G) cite, enclose, or reference any other publicly available data or information supporting the proposed solution described in subparagraph (E).

''(b) CONSULTATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any entity or organization desiring to file a petition under subsection (a) may request a consultation with the Chief Counsel before or after filing the petition.

''(2) FORM.—The Chief Counsel shall—

''(A) determine the method, timing, and form of requesting a consultation with the Chief Counsel under paragraph (1); and

''(B) display the information described in subparagraph (A) on the website of the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration in a conspicuous manner.

''(3) LIMITATIONS ON ASSISTANCE.—In any consultation regarding a petition under paragraph (1), the Chief Counsel—

''(A) may only—

''(i) describe the process for filing, docketing, tracking, closing, amending, withdrawing, and resolving the petition; and

''(ii) assist the petitioner to clarify the petition so that the Chief Counsel is able to understand the issues of concern to the petitioner; and

''(B) may not advise a petitioner on whether the petition should be amended or withdrawn.

''(c) PRIMA FACIE REVIEW.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon receipt of a petition filed under this section with respect to the certification of a proposed rule, the Chief Counsel shall make an initial prima facie determination on the merit of the issues raised in petition as to the properness of the certification and whether the proposed rule in question would, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

''(2) NO FURTHER REVIEW.—If, following the prima facie review of a petition under paragraph (1), the Chief Counsel determines that the issues raised in the petition do not merit further review by the Chief Counsel, the Chief Counsel shall, not later than 10 days after receipt of the petition, inform the petitioner of that determination and the matter shall be closed.

''(3) FURTHER REVIEW.—If, following the prima facie review of a petition under paragraph (1), the Chief Counsel determines that the issues raised in the petition do merit further review by the Chief Counsel, the Chief Counsel shall, not later than 10 days after receipt of the petition, inform the petitioner and the agency that promulgated the proposed rule that the Chief Counsel shall conduct a full review of the certification and proposed rule to which the petition relates under subsection (d).

''(d) FULL REVIEW.—

''(1) CONSIDERATIONS; MEETING.—In conducting a full review under this subsection with respect to the certification made under section 605(b), the Chief Counsel shall—

''(A) consider—

''(i) whether the agency that promulgated the proposed rule correctly determined which small entities will be affected by the proposed rule;

''(ii) whether the agency considered adequate economic data to assess whether the proposed rule will have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities; and

''(iii) the economic implications of the proposed rule; and

''(B) convene a virtual or in-person meeting between the Chief Counsel, the petitioner, representatives of the agency that promulgated the proposed rule who are determined appropriate by the Chief Counsel, and the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory affairs to—

''(i) provide positions and support for those positions regarding the certification of the proposed rule; and

''(ii) allow the Chief Counsel to ask questions as the Chief Counsel determines necessary to make a final determination as to the validity of the certification.

''(2) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Chief Counsel begins a full review of a certification made with respect to a proposed rule under paragraph (1), the Chief Counsel shall submit to the petitioner and the agency that promulgated the proposed rule, and publish in the

Federal Register and on the website of the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, the results of the review conducted under paragraph (1).

''(3) REQUIREMENT TO PERFORM ANALYSES.—If, after a full review of a certification made with respect to a proposed rule under paragraph (1), the Chief Counsel determines that the proposed rule will, if promulgated, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities, the agency that promulgated the proposed rule shall perform an initial regulatory flexibility analysis and a final regulatory flexibility analysis for the proposed rule under sections 603 and 604, respectively.

''(4) PENALTY.—If an agency fails to attend the required meeting under paragraph (1)(B) or in any other way fails to assist the Chief Counsel in a full review under paragraph (1) with respect to a proposed rule of the agency, as determined by the Chief Counsel, the final rule shall not apply to small entities.

''(5) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—For purposes of judicial review under chapter 7 of this title, a certification made by an agency under section 605(b) for which a petition is filed under subsection (a) shall be considered final agency action as of the date on which the Chief Counsel—

''(A) makes a determination under subsection (c)(2) that the issues raised in the petition do not merit further review; or

''(B) publishes the results of a full review of the certification under paragraph (1).''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 605 the following:

''605A. Review procedures relating to initial regulatory flexibility analysis certifications.''.

SEC. 3. REVIEW PROCEDURES FOR SECTION 610 PERIODIC REVIEW OF RULES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 610 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''the following factors'';

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(C) in paragraph (5), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) except with respect to a rule that the head of such agency has determined to have a substantial beneficial effect on veterans' programs, any indirect costs described in the initial regulatory flexibility analysis under section 603(b)(6), and any other indirect costs that may have arisen during the 10-year period described in subsection (a).''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(d) If an agency fails to conduct a review of a rule, other than a rule that the head of the agency has determined to have a substantial beneficial effect on veterans' programs, as required under this section within the 10-year period described in subsection (a)—

''(1) the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration shall notify the agency that the rule has ceased to be effective;

''(2) the agency shall publish in the Federal Register a notification that the rule has ceased to be effective, and solicit comments for why the rule should be reinstated; and

''(3) if, based on the comments received under paragraph (2), the agency determines that the rule should be reinstated—

''(A) the agency shall have 180 days beginning on the date of that determination to complete the review of the rule under this section; and

''(B) upon completion of the review under subparagraph (A), the rule shall be reinstated, notwithstanding the notice and comment rulemaking procedures under section 553 of this title.''.

(b) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by subsection (a)(2) shall apply with respect to any final rule issued by an agency—

(1) during the 5-year period preceding the date of enactment of this Act; or

(2) on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XIX, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

Mr. LANDSMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 197, nays 206, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 488]

YEAS—197

Adams	García (IL)	Mrvan
Aguilar	Garcia (TX)	Nadler
Allred	Garcia, Robert	Napolitano
Amo	Golden (ME)	Neal
Auchincloss	Goldman (NY)	Neguse
Balint	Gonzalez, V.	Nickel
Barragán	Gottheimer	Norcross
Beatty	Green, Al (TX)	Ocasio-Cortez
Bera	Harder (CA)	Omar
Beyer	Hayes	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Himes	Panetta
Blunt Rochester	Horsford	Pappas
Bonamici	Houlahan	Pelosi
Boyle (PA)	Hoyer	Peltola
Brown	Hoyle (OR)	Peters
Brownley	Huffman	Pettersen
Budzinski	Ivey	Phillips
Bush	Jackson (IL)	Pingree
Carbajal	Jackson (NC)	Pocan
Cárdenas	Jacobs	Pressley
Carson	Jayapal	Quigley
Carter (LA)	Jeffries	Ramirez
Cartwright	Johnson (GA)	Raskin
Casar	Kamlager-Dove	Ross
Case	Kaptur	Ruiz
Casten	Keating	Ruppersberger
Castor (FL)	Kelly (IL)	Ryan
Castro (TX)	Kennedy	Salinas
Cherfilus-McCormick	Khanna	Sánchez
Chu	Kildee	Sarbanes
Clark (MA)	Kilmer	Scanlon
Clarke (NY)	Kim (NJ)	Schakowsky
Cleaver	Krishnamoorthi	Schiff
Clyburn	Kuster	Schneider
Cohen	Landsman	Scholten
Connolly	Larsen (WA)	Schrier
Correa	Larson (CT)	Scott (VA)
Costa	Lee (CA)	Scott, David
Courtney	Lee (NV)	Sewell
Craig	Lee (PA)	Sherman
Crow	Lee Carter	Slotkin
Cuellar	Leger Fernandez	Smith (WA)
Davids (KS)	Levin	Sorensen
Davis (IL)	Lofgren	Soto
Davis (NC)	Lynch	Spanberger
Dean (PA)	Magaziner	Stansbury
DeGette	Manning	Stanton
DeLauro	Matsui	Stevens
DelBene	McBath	Strickland
Deluzio	McClellan	Suozzi
DeSaulnier	McCollum	Sykes
Dingell	McGarvey	Takano
Doggett	McGovern	Thanedar
Escobar	McIver	Thompson (CA)
Eshoo	Meeks	Thompson (MS)
Espaillat	Menendez	Titus
Foster	Meng	Tlaib
Foushee	Mfume	Tokuda
Frankel, Lois	Moore (WI)	Tonko
Frost	Morelle	Torres (CA)
Garamendi	Moskowitz	Torres (NY)
	Moulton	Trahan
	Trone	Velázquez
	Underwood	Wasserman Schultz
	Vargas	Waters
	Vasquez	Watson Coleman
	Veasey	Wild
		Williams (GA)
		Wilson (FL)

NAYS—206

Aderholt	Franklin, Scott	Mills
Alford	Fry	Molinaro
Allen	Fulcher	Moolenaar
Amodei	Garbarino	Mooney
Armstrong	Gimenez	Moore (AL)
Arrington	Gonzales, Tony	Moore (UT)
Babin	Good (VA)	Moran
Bacon	Gooden (TX)	Murphy
Baird	Gosar	Nehls
Balderson	Graves (LA)	Newhouse
Banks	Green (TN)	Norman
Barr	Greene (GA)	Nunn (IA)
Bean (FL)	Griffith	Obernolte
Bentz	Grothman	Ogles
Bergman	Guest	Owens
Bice	Guthrie	Palmer
Biggs	Hageman	Pence
Bilirakis	Harris	Perry
Bishop (NC)	Harshbarger	Pfluger
Boebert	Hern	Posey
Bost	Hill	Reschenthaler
Brecheen	Hinson	Rogers (AL)
Buchanan	Houchin	Rosendale
Bucshon	Hudson	Rouzer
Burchett	Huizenga	Roy
Burgess	Hunt	Rulli
Burlison	Issa	Rutherford
Calvert	Jackson (TX)	Salazar
Cammack	James	Scalise
Caraveo	Johnson (SD)	Schweikert
Carey	Jordan	Scott, Austin
Carl	Joyce (OH)	Self
Carter (GA)	Joyce (PA)	Sessions
Carter (TX)	Kean (NJ)	Simpson
Chavez-DeRemer	Kelly (MS)	Smith (MO)
Ciscomani	Kelly (PA)	Smith (NE)
Cline	Kiggans (VA)	Smith (NJ)
Cloud	Kiley	Smucker
Clyde	Kim (CA)	Spartz
Cole	Kustoff	Stauber
Collins	LaHood	Steel
Comer	LaLota	Stefanik
Crane	LaMalfa	Steil
Crawford	Lamborn	Steube
Curtis	Langworthy	Strong
D'Esposito	Latta	Tenney
Davidson	LaTurner	Thompson (PA)
De La Cruz	Lawler	Tiffany
DesJarlais	Lee (FL)	Timmons
Diaz-Balart	Lesko	Turner
Donalds	Letlow	Valadao
Duarte	Lopez	Van Drew
Dunn (FL)	Loudermilk	Van Duyne
Edwards	Lucas	Van Orden
Ellzey	Luttrell	Wagner
Emmer	Mace	Walberg
Estes	Malliotakis	Weber (TX)
Ezell	Maloy	Webster (FL)
Fallon	Mann	Wenstrup
Feenstra	Mast	Westerman
Ferguson	McCaul	Wied
Finstad	McClain	Williams (NY)
Fischbach	McClintock	Williams (TX)
Fitzgerald	McCormick	Wilson (SC)
Fitzpatrick	Meuser	Wittman
Fleischmann	Miller (IL)	Womack
Flood	Miller (OH)	Yakym
Fong	Miller (WV)	Zinke
Foxx	Miller-Meeks	

NOT VOTING—29

Blumenauer	Granger	Perez
Bowman	Graves (MO)	Porter
Crenshaw	Grijalva	Rodgers (WA)
Crockett	Higgins (LA)	Rogers (KY)
Duncan	Lieu	Rose
Evans	Luetkemeyer	Sherrill
Fletcher	Luna	Swalwell
Gallego	Massie	Waltz
Garcia, Mike	McHenry	Wexton
Gomez	Mullin	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1734

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 208, nays 196, not voting 28, as follows:

[Roll No. 489]

YEAS—208

Aderholt
Alford
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brecheen
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Caraveo
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Crane
Crawford
Cuellar
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davidson
De La Cruz
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duarte
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Fong
Foxx
Franklin, Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Garbarino
Gimenez
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Graves (LA)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Jackson (TX)
James
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kean (NJ)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kim (CA)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luttrell
Mace
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Mast
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McCormick
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rulli
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wied
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—196

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Amo
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crow
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gonzalez, V.
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lee Carter
Leger Fernandez
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
McIver
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pelosi
Peltola
Peters
Pettersen
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)

NOT VOTING—28

Blumenauer
Bowman
Crenshaw
Crockett
Duncan
Evans
Fletcher
Gallego
Garcia, Mike
Gomez
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Lieu
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Massie
McHenry
Mullin
Perez
Porter
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Sherrill
Swalwell
Waltz
Wexton

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1747

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to raise a question of the privileges of the House and offer a resolution previously noticed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 1608

Whereas on April 9, 2021, the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives announced that it had begun to investigate allegations that Representative Matt Gaetz may have engaged in sexual misconduct and/or illicit drug use, shared inappropriate images or videos on the House floor, misused State identification records, converted campaign funds for personal use, and/or accepted a bribe, improper gratuity, or impermissible gift in violation of the Rules of the House, laws, or other standards of conduct;

Whereas over three years, the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives compiled an extensive investigative record pursuant to Committee Rules 14(a)(3) and 18(a) into allegations that Representative Gaetz may have engaged in sexual misconduct and illicit drug use, accepted improper gifts, dispensed special privileges and favors to individuals with whom he had a personal relationship, and sought to obstruct government investigations of his conduct;

Whereas on November 13, 2024, Representative Matt Gaetz announced his resignation from Congress;

Whereas there is precedent for the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives to continue investigating and release reports of its investigations into former Members of the House of Representatives;

Whereas in 1987, the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives released a report on its investigation into allegations of the misuse of campaign funds, improper gifts, the failure to reveal business interests on his financial disclosure, and the acceptance of a bribe by former Representative Bill Boner following his resignation from Congress;

Whereas in 1990, the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives released a report on its investigations of sexual misconduct allegations, which included having sexual intercourse with a minor and making sexual advances towards a congressional employee, against former Representative Don Lukens following his resignation from Congress;

Whereas in 2006, the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives released a report on its investigation of sexual misconduct allegations, which included sending sexually explicit messages to at least one minor, against former Representative Mark Foley following his resignation from Congress;

Whereas in 2011, the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives continued its investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct against former Representative Eric Massa following his resignation from Congress; and

Whereas given the serious nature of the allegations against Representative Gaetz, a failure of the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives to publicly release its report on its investigation undermines the committee's credibility and impedes the safety, dignity, and integrity of the legislative proceedings of the House: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives shall immediately release the latest draft of its report and a summary of its findings to the public, including any conclusions, draft reports, recommendations, attachments, exhibits and accompanying materials, with such redactions as may be necessary and appropriate to protect sensitive information, including witness identities, related to its investigation into allegations against former Representative Matt Gaetz.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution qualifies.

MOTION TO REFER

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion at the desk to refer the resolution to the Committee on Ethics.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Scalise of Louisiana moves to refer the resolution to the Committee on Ethics.

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

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, the Member being referenced in the resolution has actually resigned from the House of Representatives. Therefore, the question is moot.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''yes'' vote on the motion to refer, and I yield back the balance of my time and move the previous question.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to refer.

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

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 206, nays 198, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 490]

YEAS—206

Aderholt	Diaz-Balart	Jackson (TX)
Alford	Donalds	James
Allen	Duarte	Johnson (LA)
Amodei	Dunn (FL)	Johnson (SD)
Armstrong	Edwards	Jordan
Arrington	Ellzey	Joyce (OH)
Babin	Emmer	Joyce (PA)
Bacon	Estes	Kean (NJ)
Baird	Ezell	Kelly (MS)
Balderson	Fallon	Kelly (PA)
Banks	Feenstra	Kiggans (VA)
Barr	Ferguson	Kiley
Bean (FL)	Finstad	Kim (CA)
Bentz	Fischbach	Kustoff
Bergman	Fitzgerald	LaHood
Bice	Fitzpatrick	LaLota
Biggs	Fleischmann	LaMalfa
Bilirakis	Flood	Lamborn
Bishop (NC)	Fong	Langworthy
Boebert	Foxx	Latta
Bost	Franklin, Scott	LaTurner
Brecheen	Fry	Lawler
Buchanan	Fulcher	Lee (FL)
Bucshon	Garbarino	Lesko
Burchett	Gimenez	Letlow
Burgess	Gonzales, Tony	Lopez
Burlison	Good (VA)	Loudermilk
Calvert	Gooden (TX)	Lucas
Cammack	Gosar	Luttrell
Carey	Graves (LA)	Mace
Carl	Green (TN)	Malliotakis
Carter (GA)	Greene (GA)	Maloy
Carter (TX)	Griffith	Mann
Chavez-DeRemer	Grothman	Mast
Ciscomani	Guest	McCaul
Cline	Guthrie	McClain
Cloud	Hageman	McCormick
Clyde	Harris	Meuser
Cole	Harshbarger	Miller (IL)
Collins	Hern	Miller (OH)
Comer	Higgins (LA)	Miller (WV)
Crane	Hill	Miller-Meeks
Crawford	Hinson	Mills
Curtis	Houchin	Molinaro
D'Esposito	Hudson	Moolenaar
Davidson	Huizenga	Mooney
De La Cruz	Hunt	Moore (AL)
DesJarlais	Issa	Moore (UT)
Moran	Salazar	Timmons
Murphy	Scalise	Turner
Nehls	Schweikert	Valadao
Newhouse	Scott, Austin	Van Drew
Norman	Self	Van Duyne
Nunn (IA)	Sessions	Van Orden
Obernolte	Simpson	Wagner
Ogles	Smith (MO)	Walberg
Owens	Smith (NE)	Weber (TX)
Palmer	Smith (NJ)	Webster (FL)
Pence	Smucker	Wenstrup
Perry	Spartz	Westerman
Pfluger	Stauber	Wied
Posey	Steel	Williams (NY)
Reschenthaler	Stefanik	Williams (TX)
Rogers (AL)	Steil	Wilson (SC)
Rosendale	Steube	Wittman
Rouzer	Strong	Womack
Roy	Tenney	Yakym
Rulli	Thompson (PA)	Zinke
Rutherford	Tiffany	

NAYS—198

Adams	Gonzalez, V.	Pallone
Aguilar	Gottheimer	Panetta
Allred	Green, Al (TX)	Pappas
Amo	Harder (CA)	Pelosi
Auchincloss	Hayes	Peltola
Balint	Himes	Peters
Barragán	Horsford	Pettersen
Beatty	Houlahan	Phillips
Bera	Hoyer	Pingree
Beyer	Hoyle (OR)	Pocan
Bishop (GA)	Huffman	Pressley
Blunt Rochester	Ivey	Quigley
Bonamici	Jackson (IL)	Ramirez
Boyle (PA)	Jackson (NC)	Raskin
Brown	Jacobs	Ross
Brownley	Jayapal	Ruiz
Budzinski	Jeffries	Ruppersberger
Bush	Johnson (GA)	Ryan
Caraveo	Kamlager-Dove	Salinas
Carbajal	Kaptur	Sánchez
Cárdenas	Keating	Sarbanes
Carson	Kelly (IL)	Scanlon
Carter (LA)	Kennedy	Schakowsky
Cartwright	Khanna	Schiff
Casar	Kildee	Schneider
Case	Kilmer	Scholten
Casten	Kim (NJ)	Schrier
Castor (FL)	Krishnamoorthi	Scott (VA)
Castro (TX)	Kuster	Scott, David
Cherfilus-McCormick	Landsman	Sewell
Chu	Larsen (WA)	Sherman
Clark (MA)	Larson (CT)	Slotkin
Clarke (NY)	Lee (CA)	Smith (WA)
Cleaver	Lee (NV)	Sorensen
Clyburn	Lee (PA)	Soto
Cohen	Lee Carter	Spanberger
Connolly	Leger Fernandez	Stansbury
Correa	Levin	Stanton
Costa	Lofgren	Stevens
Courtney	Lynch	Strickland
Craig	Magaziner	Suozzi
Crow	Manning	Sykes
Davids (KS)	Matsui	Takano
Davis (IL)	McBath	Thanedar
Davis (NC)	McClellan	Thompson (CA)
Dean (PA)	McClintock	Thompson (MS)
DeGette	McCollum	Titus
DeLauro	McGarvey	Tlaib
DelBene	McGovern	Tokuda
Deluzio	McIver	Tonko
DeSaulnier	Meeks	Torres (CA)
Dingell	Menendez	Torres (NY)
Doggett	Meng	Trahan
Escobar	Mfume	Trone
Eshoo	Moore (WI)	Underwood
Espaillat	Morelle	Vargas
Foster	Moskowitz	Vasquez
Foushee	Moulton	Veasey
Frankel, Lois	Mrvan	Velázquez
Frost	Nadler	Wasserman Schultz
Garamendi	Napolitano	Waters
García (IL)	Neal	Watson Coleman
Garcia (TX)	Neguse	Wild
Garcia, Robert	Nickel	Williams (GA)
Golden (ME)	Norcross	Wilson (FL)
Goldman (NY)	Ocasio-Cortez	
	Omar	

NOT VOTING—29

Blumenauer	Fletcher	Lieu
Bowman	Gallego	Luetkemeyer
Crenshaw	Garcia, Mike	Luna
Crockett	Gomez	Massie
Cuellar	Granger	McHenry
Duncan	Graves (MO)	Mullin
Evans	Grijalva	Perez
Porter	Rose	Waltz
Rodgers (WA)	Sherrill	Wexton
Rogers (KY)	Swalwell	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1758

Mr. GROTHMAN changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to refer was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to hope that about nine Republicans leave and don't vote, and I rise to a question of the privileges of the House and offer the resolution that was previously noticed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 1609

Whereas Matthew Louis Gaetz II of Florida served in the House of Representatives from January 3, 2017 through November 13, 2024;

Whereas clause 2 of section 5 of article I of the Constitution of the United States establishes that ''Each House may determine the Rules of its proceedings'' and ''punish its members for disorderly Behavior'';

Whereas clause 3(a)(2) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives provides the Committee on Ethics the authority to investigate alleged violations ''by a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House of the Code of Official Conduct or of a law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to the conduct of such Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee in the performance of the duties or the discharge of the responsibilities of such individual'';

Whereas on April 9, 2021, the Committee on Ethics initiated a review of allegations that Representative Gaetz may have ''engaged in sexual misconduct and/or illicit drug use, shared inappropriate images or videos on the House floor, misused state identification records, converted campaign funds to personal use, and/or accepted a bribe, improper gratuity, or impermissible gift, in violation of House Rules, laws, or other standards of conduct'' in violation of Federal law and the Rules of the House;

Whereas on June 18, 2024, the Committee on Ethics released a statement acknowledging the Committee's continued review of allegations that Representative Gaetz may have ''engaged in sexual misconduct and illicit drug use, accepted improper gifts, dispensed special privileges and favors to individuals with whom he had a personal relationship, and sought to obstruct government investigations of his conduct''; and

Whereas if Representative Gaetz engaged in the alleged violations while serving as a Member of the House, such conduct would affect the rights of the House of Representatives and the integrity of the legislative process: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Committee on Ethics shall—

(1) preserve all documents and investigative materials related to any review of Matthew Louis Gaetz II's conduct while serving

as a Member of the House of Representatives;

(2) publicly release the Committee's report, including any associated findings, recommendations, and proposed disciplinary actions, as discussed by the Committee on November 20, 2024, regarding the alleged violations of the Code of Official Conduct of the House or of a law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct by Matthew Louis Gaetz II while serving as a Member of the House of Representatives; and

(3) in accordance with the Committee's practice for releasing public documents, anonymize witness identities and redact any personally identifiable information of minors and victims from any House documents associated with this matter before publicly releasing them.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution qualifies.

MOTION TO REFER

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion at the desk to refer the resolution to the Committee on Ethics.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Scalise of Louisiana moves to refer the resolution to the Committee on Ethics.

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

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, we have heard enough on this. We can talk about it for an hour, four hours. The bottom line, Mr. Speaker: Why don't we get back to work for the people of this country.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on the motion to refer. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the motion to refer.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to refer.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 204, noes 198, not voting 31, as follows:

[Roll No. 491]

AYES—204

Aderholt
Alford
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brecheen
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burchett
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Crane
Crawford
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davidson
De La Cruz
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duarte
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Fong
Foxx
Franklin, Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Garbarino
Gimenez
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Graves (LA)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Issa
Jackson (TX)
James
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kean (NJ)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kim (CA)
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Lopez
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luttrell
Mace
Malliotakis
Maloy
Mann
Mast
McCaul
McClain
McCormick
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Obernolte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rogers (AL)
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rulli
Rutherford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wied
Williams (NY)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOES—198

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Amo
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-McCormick
Chu
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crow
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gonzalez, V.
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Lee Carter
Leger Fernandez
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McClintock
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
McIver
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pelosi
Peltola
Peters
Pettersen
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)

NOT VOTING—31

Blumenauer
Bowman
Burgess
Crenshaw
Crockett
Cuellar
Duncan
Evans
Fletcher
Gallego
Garcia, Mike
Gomez
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Lieu
Luetkemeyer
Luna
Massie
McHenry
Mullin
Perez
Porter
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Salazar
Sherrill
Swalwell
Waltz
Wexton

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1810

So the motion to refer was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. PEREZ. Mr. Speaker, I unfortunately missed votes today due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call No. 484, YEA on Roll Call No. 485, YEA on Roll Call No. 486, NAY on Roll Call No. 487, YEA on Roll Call No. 488, NAY on Roll Call No. 489, NAY on Roll Call No. 490, and NAY on Roll Call No. 491.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during the time of votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call No. 484; S. 709; YEA on Roll Call No. 485; H.R. 9598; YEA on Roll Call No. 486; H.R. 9600; YEA on Roll Call No. 487; Velazquez of New York Part B Amendment 1; YEA on Roll Call No. 488; Motion to Recommit; NAY on Roll Call No. 489; On Passage; H.R. 7198; NAY on Roll Call No. 490; Motion to Refer; H. Res 1068, and NAY on Roll Call No. 491; Motion to Refer; H. Res 1609.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I missed a series of votes. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 484, YEA on Roll Call No. 485, YEA on Roll Call No. 486, NAY on Roll Call No. 487, NAY on Roll Call No. 488, YEA on Roll Call No. 489, YEA on Roll Call No. 490, and AYE on Roll Call No. 491.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present to cast my votes on Roll Call Nos. 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490 and 491. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 484, YEA on Roll Call No. 485, YEA on Roll Call No. 486, YEA on Roll Call No. 487, YEA on Roll Call No. 488, NAY on Roll Call No. 489, NAY on Roll Call No. 490, and NAY on Roll Call No. 491.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 374

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered as the first sponsor of H.R. 374, a bill originally introduced by Representative Gaetz of Florida, for the purpose of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1815

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LOPEZ) laid before the House the following resignation from the House of Representatives:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, December 5, 2024.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Enclosed is my resignation letter to New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, effective December 8, 2024. It has been the honor of my life to serve New Jersey's Third Congressional District. I'm grateful to the people of New Jersey for entrusting me with the great honor of representing them in the United States Senate and I hope to do so with humility and integrity.

Sincerely,

ANDY KIM,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, December 5, 2024.

Gov. PHILIP D. MURPHY,
125 West State Street
Trenton, NJ.

DEAR GOVERNOR MURPHY, It is an honor and privilege to have been chosen by the people of New Jersey to serve them in the United States Senate. As you know, Senator Helmy has announced his intention to resign so that New Jerseyans may have their duly elected representation in the United States Senate as soon as possible. I, therefore, write to submit my resignation from the United States House of Representatives, effective December 8, 2024.

It has been the honor of my life to serve New Jersey's Third Congressional District, its people, and the community that raised me for these past six years. I look forward to the opportunity to serve the entirety of our state and I hope to do so with humility and integrity.

I thank you for your leadership and the opportunity.

Sincerely,

ANDY KIM,
Member of Congress.

VETERANS AFFAIRS DOGE CUTS

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

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I am all for protecting public money, fighting price gouging in the defense industry and others. I am not for the Department of Government Efficiency going after veterans' healthcare to pay for billionaire tax handouts.

I use the VA for my care, as do thousands of my constituents in western Pennsylvania. Yet, DOGE proposes cutting $119 billion from veterans' healthcare. That is more than a third of the Department of Veterans Affairs' budget. That is all types of healthcare: surgical, specialty care, dental care, counseling for combat veterans, and more. It is ridiculous.

My question to my friends on the other side of the aisle, President-elect Trump, and others is this: Do you want to cut healthcare for veterans who risked their lives for this country? If not, you should say you don't. You should stand up against this. If you do, folks like me are going to fight you every step of the way. This is the cost of war, and this country expects us to pay it.

REMEMBERING BRYCE A. JOHNSON

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

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Bryce A. Johnson, who passed away suddenly this week at the age of 52. He was a husband to Erika, father to Will, son to Terry, and a friend to me.

He was a dedicated public servant who served as the Tifton Judicial Circuit District Attorney. In addition to his legal career, his love for our country and politics led him to teach history and political science to students at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. He also had a passion for Georgia high school football and cohosted a local Friday night high school football radio show for about 15 years.

Bryce was one of those guys that no matter what team he was on or what group he was in, the organization was better because of him. Bryce was a genuinely good person who will be missed by those of us who had the privilege to know him.

CONGRATULATING DR. GEORGE HANBURY ON HIS RETIREMENT

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to rise and recognize the distinguished career of Dr. George Hanbury, the president and CEO of Nova Southeastern University.

Since 2010, Dr. Hanbury guided this institution with vision, integrity, and a true dedication to excellence. His impact is evident in the growth, innovation, and spirit that defines NSU, its students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

During his tenure, NSU established a state-of-the-art teaching hospital. It also opened the Levan Center of Innovation for startup businesses and student entrepreneurship. It became the third university nationwide to offer both osteopathic and allopathic medical degrees in 2018.

Dr. Hanbury also established the President's 64, an elite group of student leaders with the purpose to strengthen the relationship between the university and its community. During a recent interview, he said his 27 years at NSU is ''the most noble thing I have ever done.''

I wish him well on his retirement and thank him for, the thoughtful and committed work he has done to enrich the students and faculty at Nova Southeastern University.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSWOMAN DEBBIE LESKO

(Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my dear friend and colleague, DEBBIE LESKO, whom I have known for the past 6-plus years.

DEBBIE is such a hard worker. She has done so much incredible work serving her constituents in Arizona. She has done wonderful things for her State. For years, she served on the community committee for the Peoria Unified School District and later ran for school board.

From 2008 to 2018, she served in the Arizona legislature for 9 years, both in the house and the senate, where she received special recognition such as Champion of the Taxpayer, Guardian of Small Business, and Senator of the Year from various organizations, due to her outstanding work.

DEBBIE has served on several subcommittees within the Committee on Energy and Commerce during her time in the House of Representatives. She has served on several caucuses and founded the wonderful Protect Kids Caucus. In the 118th Congress, House Majority Whip TOM EMMER appointed her as a member of the whip team.

Some of DEBBIE's bills, including the Hands Off Our Home Appliances Act and the United States Ports of Entry Threat and Operational Review Act have either successfully passed in the House or become law.

She led a delegation to Taiwan where we had many discussions about the importance of ensuring their independence from China. We also had a lot of fun!

DEBBIE has achieved many great things over the years and has made a positive impact while partaking in politics. I can attest to this firsthand as we sat next to each other for nearly every vote and would often discuss policy on the House floor.

She has accomplished so much in her work, and I am sure that she would say her greatest achievements in life are being a mother to her children and a

grandmother to her beautiful grandchildren. As a mother and grandmother, myself, I know how much of a blessing family is.

I wish there could be more opportunities for us to work together DEBBIE, but I know you will do a fantastic job as you enter your next chapter of life serving as Maricopa County Supervisor.

Thank you for your commitment to helping make Arizona a better place to live, for helping our nation, and for upholding conservative values.

We will all miss you!

THANK YOU TO JO-ANN YOO

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

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my heartfelt gratitude to Jo-Ann Yoo for her lifetime of public service on behalf of the AAPI community in my district and the entire city of New York.

This year, Jo-Ann will retire after 13 years as executive director of the Asian American Federation, an organization dedicated to supporting the 1.5 million Asian-American community members in New York City.

Under Jo-Ann's leadership, the AAF played a leading role in combating the horrific rise in anti-Asian hate in 2020, organizing and ensuring local community response to provide safety to AAPI New Yorkers.

Jo-Ann testified at a public briefing held by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on the Federal response to anti-Asian hate, and she serves on New York City's Advisory Board on Implementation of Racial Justice Commission, working to end hate and discrimination of all kinds in our city.

Jo-Ann leaves behind a lasting legacy of spirit, courage, determination, and advocacy that will be felt for decades to come. Thanks to Jo-Ann, New York City is a better and far more tolerant place.

HONORING THE LATE CORPORAL MATTHEW A. WYATT

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

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Corporal Matthew A. Wyatt.

After graduating high school in June 2001, Corporal Wyatt made the courageous decision to serve his country. He joined the Marine Corps, where he was based at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina before deploying to Iraq.

On December 3, 2004, Corporal Wyatt gave his life to stop an enemy attack on his base. He was only 21 years old. Corporal Wyatt bravely acted without hesitation to save the lives of his fellow servicemembers.

Today, his memory is carried forward by his father, Marine Gunnery Sergeant Alan Wyatt; his mother, Verlene; and the entire family, who proudly uphold the three-generation legacy of military service.

Corporal Wyatt's stepmother, Lauren, also continues to honor his legacy through her work in my district office, where she serves veterans and military families, ensuring they receive the support they need.

To pay tribute to Corporal Wyatt's sacrifice, I am proud to support legislation to rename the United States Post Office in his hometown of Millstadt, Illinois, in his honor. While no act of gratitude will ever be enough to fill the void left by Corporal Wyatt's absence, I hope this naming will comfort his loved ones and remind them that his sacrifice will not be forgotten.

CELEBRATING BLUE COLLIE COFFEE SHOP

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Disability Awareness Month, we celebrate the inspiring work of Blue Collie Coffee Shop in Louisburg, North Carolina.

Since creating Blue Collie Coffee Shop, Al and Paige Sayles have provided meaningful employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Blue Collie has employed over 16 individuals, helping them gain meaningful skills and confidence while fostering an inclusive work environment where everyone has a chance to thrive.

Al and Paige's dedication to creating opportunities and building a more inclusive community is nothing short of remarkable. Their work transforms lives, opening doors and breaking down barriers one cup of coffee at a time. I thank Al and Paige.

SERVING IN CONGRESS HAS BEEN THE HONOR OF MY LIFETIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. LESKO) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to submit extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

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

It has been the honor of my lifetime to serve in these sacred Halls of the U.S. House of Representatives. Part of that great honor is to serve with fantastic colleagues, Members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR), my great colleague.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my good friend, the gentlewoman from Arizona, DEBBIE LESKO, Representative DEBBIE LESKO.

Representative LESKO has served Arizona's Eighth Congressional District with distinction and honor. She has fought for Arizonans and all Americans and has been a champion for the people she represents.

It has been my honor serving with Representative LESKO in the Arizona delegation. As a colleague, we frequently collaborated as advocates on behalf of communities in Arizona.

It is an honor to stand here tonight before you and tell my friend DEBBIE LESKO how much she means to me and how much I am going to miss her in these hallowed Halls of the House of Representatives.

However, I am heartened. I know she won't be too far away, and you can bet I am going to continue to phone her whenever I need her advice or just to talk.

More importantly, I am confident her character, demeanor, and principles will continue to serve her well in Maricopa County, where she has been recently elected to the Board of Supervisors. However, I am worried about it. In Congress, DEBBIE represented 800,000 people with full-time staff, but now she will represent over a million people with just one full-time employee. DOGE should learn something from you.

Congress' loss is Maricopa's gain. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve with her. I applaud her for her service and wish her all the best. Arizona is a better place because of DEBBIE LESKO.

May God bless her and her husband, Joe.

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative GOSAR for his remarks. It means so much to me.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STANTON), another colleague.

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to send off my colleague, DEBBIE LESKO, and honor her long career in public service.

I first got to know DEBBIE when she was working on pension reform as a State senator and I was working on pension reform as mayor of the city of Phoenix.

We were both elected to Congress in the year 2018, and over the last 6 years, we have probably canceled each other's votes out more often than not.

□ 1830

Mr. Speaker, you know what? We have developed a really great friendship, spending so many hours together, talking about our families and politics at Sky Harbor International Airport and DCA as we wait to board our weekly flights back and forth to Washington.

I want to say something about DEBBIE. She inspires me. She is a survivor of domestic violence, and she got out of an abusive marriage.

Do you know what she did?

She poured herself into our community on the Peoria school board, at the State legislature, and now as a Member of the United States Congress. That is a great American success story.

Over her years in public office, she has shown immense courage in sharing her story as a domestic violence survivor and using her office to fight for other survivors to receive the care and attention they deserve.

To DEBBIE'S husband, Joe, I see you on those weekly flights. It is not easy being a congressional spouse. I see the long hours you put in, in supporting DEBBIE. Thank you for sharing her with us.

I am going to miss DEBBIE in Congress, but she is continuing her work in public service as a newly elected Maricopa County supervisor. DEBBIE, I have one request in your new role. Please don't ever let the Cyber Ninjas back in Maricopa County.

In all seriousness, I am wishing you all the very best. Godspeed, Congresswoman LESKO.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you so much, Representative STANTON. I greatly appreciate the words. I will tell Joe, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS), my friend and colleague who I have known for many years.

Mr. BIGGS. Thank you. You didn't have to put the ''many'' in front of that, DEBBIE.

It is true. She was a young child when we first met.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to speak and recognize my good friend, DEBBIE. When I was serving from the east side of the valley and DEBBIE got elected to the school board, I started hearing about DEBBIE LESKO is going to be this great conservative politico. I did not know DEBBIE at that time, but I got to observe her. Then we ended up serving in the State legislature together, and she was dynamic and exciting and actually conservative.

As GREG mentioned, she worked on pension reform. The bulk of that took place after I left, thankfully, because pension reform, as anybody who has ever done it knows, is one ugly thing and takes a lot of courage. DEBBIE exhibited courage, and I would get reports on how she was doing that.

She brought in people with very disparate interests. She worked with them. She got them on board, and she would tell them where the rubber met the road. That was really awesome.

Then I am here, and then the next thing I know, DEBBIE is here with me. The bad news for me is that she is going home to Maricopa County. She is going to do a great job there.

This is great news for Maricopa County which, by the way, is one of the largest counties in the country. It is about, what, 5.5 million people in the county, something like that, with only five supervisors.

DEBBIE has told me this. I know she has told PAUL this. I know she has told GREG this, and I know she has told DAVID and JUAN this: she only has one-and-a-half staffers. That is really bugging her. I can tell you that. She is going to do a great job.

She has been a great friend.

I will also pay homage to Joe and DEBBIE'S family who have been so supportive, literally, for many years.

So with that, I——

Mrs. LESKO. Don't make me cry, ANDY.

Mr. BIGGS. I am like Winston Churchill. I am a crier.

DEBBIE, Cindy and I love you.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you very much, ANDY.

Congressman BIGGS, you are a great friend. Thank you so much. We will be working many years together. I am going to keep calling you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. HARSHBARGER).

DIANA and I sit with each other in the women's row. And sometimes guys want to, you know, infiltrate, and we kick them out.

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Exactly. Exactly.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and legacy of my dear friend and colleague, Congresswoman DEBBIE LESKO, from the great State of Arizona.

I have had the privilege of working alongside Congresswoman LESKO for almost 4 years. In that time, I have had the opportunity to get to know her, working on the Energy and Commerce Committee and the caucuses we share.

Congresswoman LESKO is a true civil servant, leader, and dedicated mother and grandmother to a wonderful family. I know they will be grateful to be able to spend more time with her at home.

Throughout her career in Congress, Mrs. LESKO has dedicated herself to defending the very principles that our Nation was founded upon. She stood up for religious freedom, speaking boldly in favor of faith-based institutions faced with encroachments from the Federal Government.

She has defended life, introducing legislation to prevent the dismemberment of unborn children in the womb. She stood up for justice, launching the Protect Kids Caucus to defend the innocent children in our schools' healthcare and government programs.

Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman LESKO'S unwavering commitment to faith, family, and freedom has left an incredible mark on these Halls and the lives of countless Americans. While her leadership will be deeply missed, her legacy of service will continue to be remembered for years to come.

Thank you, DEBBIE, for being a wonderful friend to me. I will miss you.

We are going to charge for the seat you are going to vacate if somebody wants to sit there. Okay?

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you very much, DIANA. I greatly appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT), my colleague who is sitting to my left, who I have known for a long time, too. I went to your wedding reception, I think.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, one of the magic things about DEBBIE LESKO is she has proven you can be conservative and not be angry about it. You can actually be joyful and kind and sweet and just a decent human being. I have learned more things about urban chickens from her, because I have a 9-year-old that really wants daddy to build a chicken coop. Don't laugh. She really does.

Just an observation, because we sit on this airplane every week, flying back, and I often sit next to DEBBIE. Other Members, you see them on their computers, watching movies. DEBBIE has a stack of things because she doesn't use her computer. She has a stack of papers. You know, they do make these things called laptops.

She is there with her highlighter for hours on the airplane. That is the sort of thing you notice. You can be kind. You can be loving. You can be joyful.

DEBBIE, I think you are going to have an amazing experience with the leadership of Maricopa County. Remember, Maricopa County is right now the fourth most populous county in America. I actually still believe it is going to cross over Harris County's population. If there weren't so many hurricanes in the area, we probably would have already.

I used to be the county treasurer, and trust me, after some years around here, I miss those days when you could actually do things.

I am going to miss you. I am going to miss the times when you were my guiding light. When I am just mad, because I seem to be mad a lot, you just sort of smile and say, well, that is sort of how it is.

I think you are going to do amazing things for the people of the West Valley as their supervisor. We are going to make some very tough decisions here in the next couple of years where we are going to need the leadership at our State and local levels because we don't have a lot of dollars to send. So we are going to send a lot of our problems to you soon.

We love you, DEBBIE.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you very much, DAVID. I greatly appreciate the friendship and the work we have done together.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. CISCOMANI) my other Arizona colleague.

JUAN used to work for Governor Ducey, and that is how I met him. He is such a great Member of Congress, and I am so happy he got reelected because he is in a tough swing district.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor and pay tribute to my good friend, DEBBIE

LESKO, who has been an inspiration to so many.

We worked on different projects together. You have been a speaker and a panelist for some of the programs that Laura and I have done for youth and especially for women. I think you are a shining example.

A lot has been said by those that worked closest with you, which are, of course, our colleagues from the Arizona delegation. They have talked about your wit, your grace, your smile, the way in which you carry yourself and how you execute our priorities and our conservative values.

As has been said before, you are conservative. You are just not angry about it. You have gone out there and have done the work and have put in the time.

Seeing you on that plane, you and Joe many times, is great. I would much rather sit next to you than next to DAVID or GREG. I enjoy those trips back home when I get a chance to sit with you. You are a hard worker, giving your best to your constituents every single time. Even those who live in the southern part of the State, like myself and others, we have really admired your work the entire time.

I know you are going to do great things for Maricopa County, as well, and the entire State. Laura, our six kids, and I, wish you the very best in your next journey.

You were a great source for me in my freshman year when I had questions, from the most basic ones to the most complex ones. Your peace and the way you tackled these issues was always very inspiring, but it also gave me a great deal of confidence in what we could do with this place.

You have been a great mentor and a great friend. Thank you so much. We love you, and we are going to miss you. Thank you.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you so much, JUAN. I am going to be calling you when I need help from the county.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH), my friend and colleague who is on the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I serve as his vice chair on the Oversight and Investigation Subcommittee on Energy and Commerce.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend and colleague from Arizona's Eighth District, Congresswoman DEBBIE LESKO.

I have had the distinct pleasure of serving alongside her, as she just told you, on the Energy and Commerce Committee and, more specifically, on the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, which I chair. She served this Congress as the vice chair of that subcommittee.

We explored and investigated many important issues, some of which included COVID–19 origins. She did some more work on that. There were investigations into drug shortages and the potential exploitation of unaccompanied minors crossing our southern border. Her work with me related to world anti-doping in sports was outstanding. It was really very much appreciated.

Everyone here who has spoken already knows this. For those folks watching at home, this is one smart, tough lady. I have really, really enjoyed working with her on a number of issues over her terms here in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, her hard work and her strong conservative record is obviously appreciated back home. As you have heard others say, she just recently won election to a seat on the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors.

I congratulate you, DEBBIE, on a fantastic career in the United States House, and I applaud your decision to continue public service a little bit closer to home as a member of the board of supervisors in Maricopa County.

Your work will be missed, and it is appreciated. It also will be missed when we reconvene and start trying to tackle some tough issues, whether it be healthcare or telecom or whatever Energy and Commerce has jurisdiction over.

I thank you for your service. I appreciate you.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you very much, Morgan. I appreciate you. You always have a great legal mind, and I come to you for legal questions. You are a great person. Thank you.

Mr. GRIFFITH. You are very kind, thank you. You, likewise, are a great human being.

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE), my friend and colleague who serves on the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend, DEBBIE LESKO, and her service to our country.

What a great Member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. I have to say I know that people should be excited that she is going to come back home and serve.

We are really disappointed that you are leaving because you are so good at what you do. As many speakers have said tonight, you are a fighter. You are absolutely conservative, and you are a fighter. You always bring people along with you. You can track people because you want to bring them into the fold and not try to fight everybody outside of the tent.

It has just been a pleasure working with you and your grasp of issues and the way you work before big hearings. You know DEBBIE is going to be prepared. You know DEBBIE is going to be there and is going to make things happen. It has just been a great privilege.

□ 1845

I remember when you said that you were running for county supervisor in Maricopa County, I first thought is—because I used to serve in the state legislature, and every legislative body in the country is so vital and so important—I couldn't help but think I first thought, you are going to leave the United States House of Representatives and serve in county government. It just shows that it is not a title to you. It is how you can best serve.

It just means a lot. I had friends of mine and others who say: Do you think I should run for this or the other? I'd say: You are doing a great job where you are. Every level of government is important.

I remember when Janice Hahn—I don't know if you remember when she was here—she left to go be on the L.A. Board of Supervisors. I said: You are leaving to go back to run for the county board? And she said that it is bigger than a congressional district. Yours probably is, as well, or close to it.

It is a great privilege to be here to know that I am with someone who is about service, not about her own title.

We are going to miss you. I am going to say that first and foremost, but we are also excited for you. We are excited for the people of Maricopa County because they are getting one heck of a fighter. They are getting one heck of a believer.

They are getting somebody that is going to give all their heart and soul. We are going to miss you here, but they are going to love you there, as they already do, but they are going to love having you home. God bless you. You are a dear friend.

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, this is kind of overwhelming, but I will yield next to one of my friends and one of the ladies that sits next to me in our women's row over here, my friend and colleague from Illinois (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and legacy of my friend, Representative DEBBIE LESKO. It has been such a pleasure to serve with her in the 117th and 118th Congress.

When I first arrived, Representative LESKO was the most generous with her time, helping me navigate my way, answering questions, and offering advice. I was so grateful.

Representative LESKO is a genuinely good person, a true servant of our country, and a smart and fine lady also. I thank her for that example that she has given.

Representative LESKO has a sincere care for our children and our grandchildren, and wants to make sure that they are left with a legacy and access to the freedom and opportunities that we have all had to pursue the American Dream.

DEBBIE, I wish you all the best as you go back to Maricopa County, Arizona, to serve the good people there.

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I remember when Michelle came in, we shared someone that helped us with our campaign, and she said you need to meet MICHELLE. I met her, and I thought she was great, and I have ever since.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend and colleague from Minnesota (Mrs. FISCHBACH).

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Mrs. LESKO for her

service. I have been honored to serve with DEBBIE.

She mentioned we met before I was elected, but I have to admit, it was in a nail salon the first time we met. Nobody else here can say that.

I know that so many of the speakers have talked about DEBBIE's service. It has been incredible. They have really honored you with that and talked about that.

I want to say, one of the things I just love about DEBBIE is I have never seen her in a bad mood—never seen her in a bad mood. I was her whip representative, so I had to come and ask her how she was voting. She always has a smile on her face.

I congratulate you on your new role in Arizona. I think that the people of Arizona and you county are going to be so incredibly well-served. You will do a wonderful job for them.

I thank her for her service in Congress and thank her for her friendship and her kindness. I have been so grateful for the guidance you gave me as a freshman, and I am sure so many others, because that is the kind of person you are.

I think she is especially happy that I was elected because I took her spot on the Rules Committee. I am incredibly grateful that I have been able to call her a friend for the last 4 years. I have no doubt that she is going to continue to do incredible things in her public service.

I know you are excited about this new chapter. You are going to be missed here. Come and visit occasionally. God bless, and all the best in the world to you.

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, this lady, MARIANNETTE MILLER-MEEKS, is just an energizer bunny. Every place I go, she is there. I don't even know how she does it.

I yield to a friend and fellow Energy and Commerce Committee colleague. I remember we were on a boat somewhere and flying through—it was raining like heck, and I think she had a towel or something over her face. I don't know, but it was quite the experience.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS).

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor DEBBIE LESKO, Representative LESKO.

Although I am not from Arizona, I would wonderfully be in Arizona to have her as my Representative.

Yes, indeed, we were on a boat in Grand Lake in Oklahoma for a Heat and Western Caucus event. You don't think of Oklahoma as being cold. It was cold and rainy and nasty, but we were troopers, and we were out there.

My next interaction with Mrs. LESKO was approaching her about steering and how to get on the Energy and Commerce Committee. She was gracious, kind, knowledgeable, a tremendous mentor, as she was to everybody. Honestly, I don't think I have ever seen DEBBIE smile as much as I have seen her tonight and as I have watched this on video.

Getting on the Energy and Commerce Committee, she was just one tier above me. Although, I had served on the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis my first term between 2021 and 2022, she then came on the committee this term; so we were serving in the 118th Congress both on Energy and Commerce and on the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis.

You have heard a lot about her kindness, her mentoring, and her friendship. You have heard about her grace. You have heard how she is conservative, but not angry. That is such a great description of her.

What you didn't hear a lot about was her intellect. DEBBIE studies. She is smart. She is able to dissect through things. She is able to prioritize. She is able to condense very complex topics into a 5-minute question and answer period.

I am telling you, if you are the witness and you are giving testimony, you don't want to be on the bad side of DEBBIE LESKO. She won't be angry. She won't be vindictive. She won't use profanity, but you are going to know you have been taken to the cleaners.

She will come out with a statement. She will smile. She will lead up to it, and then, bam. You are going: Where did that come from? That is DEBBIE LESKO. That is the power of DEBBIE LESKO. That is the power of preparation.

In my time in the military, you learn: If you failed the plan, you planned to fail. She always plans. She is always on target. She always studies. She always reads. And quite honestly, isn't that what we, as Americans, want of our Congress people? If they are going to make laws, if they are going to hold government accountable, don't we want people that do the work that their constituents ask them to do? She is a role model for all of us and an inspiration on what a citizen servant should be.

Next, if you get to travel with her, you don't have to go on a boat in the rain in Oklahoma. You can go to some far-off country. She is a great shopping companion. She likes to try all different kinds of foods. She does her homework on the plane over and on the plane back.

She is just a genuine and lovely person to travel and be with. When Members of Congress have to travel places, especially far off, for the work that they do, you really want to have somebody in the seat next to you that is a joy to be with and not making all kinds of noises and all kinds of stuff. They are not high maintenance. She is a shining example of what a good travel companion and what a good Member of Congress is.

I am probably over my time. It has been a real joy to serve with DEBBIE LESKO these 4 years I have served with her. She was a tremendous asset to the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis that we served on together. She will be deeply missed. I will deeply miss her. She will be missed in our Conference for all of the reasons that everybody has said.

Mr. Speaker, we know she is going to continue to do great things for the people of Arizona. We wish her all the best. I know her husband is very happy to have her back.

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, serving in the U.S. House of Representatives has been an honor of a lifetime, very surreal. As someone said before, I think my colleague GREG STANTON from Arizona, over 31 years ago, I left an abusive ex-husband, and I had a little daughter. There were times when I had no money. I remember there was a time when I had no place to live. I went to see if I could get into a shelter, and it was full. To go from that, just trying to survive, to serving here shows you that God is good, and America is good.

Going from that, to flying on Air Force One; to sitting in my apartment in Washington, D.C., and getting a call from the President of the United States, President Trump, from staying overnight and being invited to Camp David—which not too many people get to do—and to be one of only eight U.S. Congress Members to be selected by President Trump to serve on his impeachment defense team. Wow, just absolutely unbelievable.

In the 6 years and almost 8 months that I have been here, I have been part of history. I experienced so much history that has never happened before.

I served on the Judiciary Committee during both impeachments, but it went through committee on the first impeachment of President Trump. I saw firsthand how I thought it was so corrupt and politically motivated, and it disgusted me. I was so upset. I really studied hard. I studied all of the so-called evidence, and it was just a dark time in the United States.

I was there when Robert Mueller came to Judiciary Committee to testify, and we all prepared and it was kind of really a surprise of how he testified and wasn't able to answer certain questions.

I was here in Congress and lived through COVID when Speaker PELOSI mandated that we wear masks in all of the committees and on the floor; when Speaker PELOSI put metal detectors right outside of those doors and every single Member of Congress had to go through metal detectors as if we were some type of threat.

I was here when Speaker PELOSI instituted proxy voting on the floor. It never been done before in the history of the United States; not through different diseases, not through wars, but we did it here. I joined in the lawsuit against it, thinking it was unconstitutional.

□ 1900

I was here on January 6. That was just a crazy day.

I have had one heck of a ride, one heck of a ride here, and I have met so many great people. Truly, I believe that the vast majority of Congress Members are good people, good people who want to make a difference in our lives.

I have been able to help hundreds of constituents, and that is such a great feeling because they have come up to me, and some of these constituents have come up to me crying, saying: DEBBIE, you were able to help me. I was at my wit's end. I couldn't get my Social Security payment. I couldn't get my veteran benefit payment. Your office helped me.

That is really satisfying to me.

I was able to pass legislation. Not only was I a cosponsor of the big border bill securing the border and other great bills, but there were my own bills, the Save Our Gas Stoves Act and the Hands Off Our Home Appliances Act, which were passed out of this House.

I was able to serve on the prestigious Energy and Commerce Committee, the select subcommittee on COVID–19, the Judiciary Committee, the Rules Committee, the Homeland Security Committee, and the Science, Space, and Technology Committee. What an honor it has been.

I also served on the whip team and on the steering committee where we would select which Republicans served on which committees and which Republicans served as chairman or ranking member on the committees.

I have made a lot of great friends, some of them are here today, and I will never forget you.

Now, it is time for me to move on. I have a great family at home. My mother is 95. My loving husband is home. I have three kids. I have six grandkids. I have a brother and a sister who all live within 20 minutes of my house. I am here in Washington, D.C., 60, 70 percent of the time. There is something wrong with that picture.

As I leave, it is kind of bittersweet, but I am happy. I am happy I am going home, and I am happy I have had this experience of my lifetime. I will never regret it.

I thank my constituents who have always put their trust in me, the voters in my district; President Trump, who has supported me; my staff that has worked in my congressional office either now or in the past and the staff here at the Capitol. You have been great people, and I won't forget it.

Thank you, and God bless all of you as God has blessed me.

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

DISCUSSION ABOUT DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Arizona. I didn't get a chance to get down here in time during the time that was set aside to honor her service, but I am glad I was down here and was able to get down at the tail end of it to hear her speech.

It has been an honor. We were classmates. We came in together, served together.

I remember when the gentlewoman told us that she wasn't running again. I found her on the floor, and I said: So, what is going on? Why aren't you staying with us? And she said one word, family. That is the right answer.

You have been a great patriot. Congress is far better for having had you in it, and we will miss you. We know you won't be too far away, and we hope to see you here.

God bless you. Spend time with your family. I feel the pain of being away as you do. I will be very happy for you, but I will give you a few floor speeches to watch every once in a while here just for fun.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor tonight because there is a lot of talk going on right now about what has been referred to as DOGE, this effort by our friends Elon and Vivek with respect to the Department of Government Efficiency.

I am not 100 percent clear yet what that looks like in terms of formality, how the incoming President, President Trump, plans to establish it and set it up.

We had some great meetings today with those two men and Members of Congress who are interested in facilitating their work.

My only problem with the named Department of Government Efficiency is I would refer to it as the department of government elimination. I think we would be a lot better off if we were eliminating large swaths of that which has been unconstitutionally created to rack up $36 trillion in debt.

I think what merits observation is what this body needs to do to actually deliver on what people are, I think, to some degree across the country, getting excited about with respect to the prospect of the brain power that has been assembled around this department, DOGE, or this effort. Congress has to actually do our part.

We had a meeting today. There was a lot of conversation back and forth, and there were a whole lot of Members of Congress who were looking to them to say to please do this. One Member said to please help give us the fortitude, the spine, to be able to deliver on removing and cutting this waste in government.

Look, to be very clear, the use of technology, crowdsourcing, AI by these guys and other smart people around the country, the use of technology, observe it, figure out what to do with it, great. I am for it.

I support their efforts. I support efforts by the incoming President and his staff, his administration, to, frankly, massively slash and burn the bureaucracy that is sucking away, frankly, the life of the American people through overregulation, overspending, and driving up inflation because we keep spending more and more money in this vast bureaucracy. You can't even keep up with it.

I have a bill that I introduced a few years ago, the Count the Crimes to Cut Act. Do you know why? Nobody can tell me how many crimes there are. Literally, nobody can tell me how many crimes there are in the Federal Government. Does anybody see that as a problem? We literally don't even know how many—forget cataloging them all, organizing them all, figuring out how much of them are repeated or overburdensome or perhaps out of line. We don't even know, and I can't even get that bill through the committee and down to the floor. Members of this body don't want to know how many crimes there are so we can maybe go observe and try to do something about it?

On this score is where I believe Elon and Vivek can add massive value. They don't necessarily need us to pass something to go count the crimes. They can just use technology, AI, crowdsourcing, work and put a whole lot of effort into doing that because, frankly, a lot of people don't understand this, but we are pretty short-staffed here as it relates to our offices on Capitol Hill dealing with constituents services, dealing with the stuff we deal with all the time. Having an army of people and being able to leverage that is going to be really important.

Now, let's cut to the chase. The fact of the matter is, too many Members of the United States Congress are all too excited to hide behind Elon and Vivek to do the work they are supposed to do. That is the truth. I saw colleagues going to the mike thanking them saying, oh, please save us from the scourge of bureaucracy.

Well, what the hell is our job? We actually do have separation of powers. We actually are Article I. We actually do have the ability to use the power of the purse to constrain the leviathan and the executive branch. We just never do it ever.

If we dare try, oh, the scorn, oh, the look from your colleagues when you dare come down and object to a consent request, as I did, for $19 billion. That seems trivial now, doesn't it? I objected to a consent request for $19 billion in 2019 for Hurricane Harvey relief predominantly heavily in my home State of Texas.

A unanimous consent request was being offered on the floor. I was at the airport. I got word that they were going to do this by consent. I thought, wait a minute, they are going to pass $19 billion by unanimous consent on the floor of the House, and we are not there, and it is not paid for.

Well, it might be meritorious in some respects. I don't know, but I would have to look at the funding and what it is going to be used for in Texas. There are people hurting in Texas, but we have to pay for it. We certainly don't pass things for $19 billion by consent.

Mr. Speaker, I got in my car, canceled the flight, got in a car, an Uber, came back here to the Hill, and ran down on the floor, and I objected.

Do you know what happened back in Texas? The usual suspects, the newspapers, the editorial boards, the people who like to have wailing and gnashing of teeth, and the wine-sipping crowds of the elites in the cities in Austin, they are all like: Oh, you are the devil. This is horrible. How could you do this?

A funny thing happened, and this is my message to my colleagues, my constituents, even though, again, my district wasn't as directly impacted by Harvey, fair, but my constituents and other people around the State of Texas took notice that maybe if a Member of Congress says there ought to be some principles that guide what we do and that there is a right way to do things, maybe our country would be better off. Maybe we wouldn't have $36 trillion of debt.

I would mention right now, in that very same context, we are currently considering a disaster supplemental bill again. Every year, we consider some sort of disaster supplemental bill. Why is that? That is because the world has events. They have always had events. Galveston was hit at the turn of the last century. It was wiped out. There have been floods. There have been fires. There have been constant issues, tornadoes. This isn't all related to climate change. It is over the course of the history of mankind. In fact, our use of technology makes us able to manage those better, our use of energy. We can manage that better by abundant, reliable energy.

What happens is every year there is something that strikes at our heart. There was Katrina in 2005, Ike, Harvey, what happened in Hawaii. Go down the list of things that we care about. We are in a massive drought in Texas, a massive drought.

We have all sorts of different things that pop up. So here we are, and we have $113 billion that has been put forward from the administration under the name of disaster relief.

There are all manners of things in that bill, and we are looking at those things: replenish the disaster relief fund, what we call the DRF, $40 billion; $16 billion for some stuff on defense; another pot of money for farmers who have had issues across the country related to disaster and otherwise; and go down the list to the tune of $111 billion or $113 billion.

It is not paid for. It is just another check-writing exercise, but it is the writing of a check by printing of money because that is what we do. There is no limiting principle.

My question for anybody watching this is: What do you think the limiting principle ought to be for the elected Representatives you send here to represent you? Is it, well, man, that is a really sympathetic thing; write the check. Is that our limiting principle? ''CHIP, there are people hurting in North Carolina.'' Yes, I know. I pray for them. We try to support organizations like Samaritan's Purse and others that help.

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I have had colleagues like CORY MILLS who went in early trying to deal with disaster relief. The last time I checked, the State of North Carolina is not a Third World country that has no resources or abilities. They have a very robust economy and a very strong State.

Are they unable to issue bonds?

Are they unable to find ways to come up with their own dollars to build their own infrastructure and rebuild?

The State of Texas when we have a calamity—the State of Texas is literally the eighth biggest economy in the world. Just Texas is the eighth largest economy in the world. Other than immediate disaster relief using the resources of the National Guard or the resources at FEMA where you have an actual emergency, where you have got to move people and help them deal with being in floods, we all help each other out. Send the resources, yes, Governors, go help.

However, we are now 1 month later, 2 months later.

Why is the State of Texas not able to deal with a disaster?

Are we unable to deal with it?

We have, I think, almost a $400 billion biennial budget, i.e., roughly a $200 billion a year budget in Texas.

So is Texas, the eighth largest economy, are we not able to deal with disasters?

I think we can. I think most States in this country can. I think most of us can do what we need to do.

The Federal Government doesn't need to be an ATM, but that is what we are turning it into.

If there isn't a limiting principle on printing money, then how can DOGE be successful?

Someone explain to me how all the efforts by Elon, all of the efforts by Vivek, and all of the efforts of the incoming Office of Management and Budget and President Trump, if this body, if this Congress, if this Republican majority does nothing but do the same old thing we have always done, which is come down here and write checks that have no backing, we are literally the Fed just printing money, then how can we possibly limit the size, the scope, and the growth of the Federal Government?

In other words, Mr. Speaker, look in the mirror. Don't look for a fiscal savior. Don't look for salvation for the future of the country's well-being with some folks over in the executive branch or who are friends with the executive branch who are going to provide us great information. Be grateful for it, but remember when we go through the appropriations process, it is our job. They can make the executive branch more efficient, yes, but we are the ones who create these departments and create these programs. We are supposed to authorize them, but we don't.

The Homeland Security Department was created over 20 years ago. We have never reauthorized it. It is insane. There are 200 and something thousand employees at the Department of Homeland Security. We have never reauthorized it. That is our job, but all we do is sit around and shrug our shoulders and say: Well, man, have you been to the mountains of Western North Carolina? It is just awful.

We have to write that check.

What if I say: Okay, fine. God bless these awesome Americans. They need assistance. Yeah, fine, you don't have to pay for it. Write the check.

Then what?

Do we write the next check?

Do we just keep printing money for everybody's illness?

Mr. Speaker, do you know that right now under FEMA we are using FEMA emergency dollars to pay for COVID-related burials?

Why? Why?

It is because somebody declared an energy at some point, the administration was given large pots of money, and now everybody just shrugs and walks away.

The fact of the matter is the President, President Trump, was elected in, in today's time, what you could describe as a landslide. In today's divided world with what we call the trifecta, Republicans will control the House, and Republicans will control the Senate. They are pretty thin majorities in both Chambers.

The question that will be for Republicans is: What are we going to do? Will we deliver?

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that we are not going to truly deliver unless at least two things are true, and I think there are three, four, or five, but at least two things are true.

One, we fully secure the border and undo the damage caused by the open borders of the last 4-plus years; and two, we stop spending money we don't have. If we can't do those two things, then we won't have a country left.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sitting here telling you that I think we can balance the $2 trillion deficit in 1 year. I think that would be difficult to continue to have economic growth and do what we need to do. However, I am telling you, Mr. Speaker, that we need to actually be serious because I would say to my fellow Republicans, I have said that we need to repeal the Inflation Reduction Act, which is subsidizing Chinese wind and solar. It is now putting American companies on the hook, and they are wanting to get the big drug high of getting more money and more subsidies.

We are now turning ourselves away from what is the strength of the reliable American oil and gas industry. We are driving up the cost of goods and driving up inflation all under the Inflation Reduction Act.

My view is, and the view of most Americans, and I promise you, virtually everybody in this Chamber—not all—we ran on repealing the so-called Inflation Reduction Act, ending those subsidies, returning to market forces determining the best reliable energy and, importantly, stop spending money we don't have for the subsidies to enrich the Chinese and enrich our enemies who undermine our own well-being.

A handful of my colleagues signed a letter saying that they don't want to do that.

Let me just posit: What if I am successful?

What if we are successful and we repeal it?

What have we done?

We have returned to the status quo of 2022.

Basically, on that issue I am begging to return to the halcyon days of old in 2022 when everything was great, deficits were great, and everything was wonderful.

I am being sarcastic.

So if I am successful, I fight, and I struggle for all the people who don't want to tell their big corporations ''no,'' who are now hooked on the subsidies, because that is what is going to happen, including Texas, I am looking at you, Texas, all your big oil and gas companies are getting on the hook because they like free money. It ain't free, by the way. They like subsidies they can turn into current-day profits at the expense of your children's future. It is because they don't care because they will get a good earnings report, and they will make money now.

However, the debt will keep going up and the dollar will keep getting weakened and inflation will keep being real.

So if we can do it, if we can repeal it, if we are successful, then all we will do is rewind the clock to 2022. If we return to pre-COVID spending, Mr. Speaker, all you do is return the clock to 2020. That would basically save us $200 billion a year.

Repealing the so-called Inflation Reduction Act and ending those subsidies would save us, oh, probably about $70 billion a year over 10 years.

What if we secure the border tomorrow?

Now, mind you, Mr. Speaker, securing the border even under President Trump meant we had 30,000 or so a month still coming across the border. Let's just say we secure the border.

Now what are we doing with the, what, 10 million people or so who are now in our country that weren't?

Okay, let's repatriate them.

How many will we repatriate?

We would have to repatriate them all just to return to the status quo.

Mr. Speaker, my point of all this is: If you want to transform the country, then we need transformative policies, and you need a Congress willing to do it. You need a Congress willing to actually deliver on what they said they would do.

This is a refrain I have offered in a number of speeches here on the floor of the House. They are not always that well received. I gave a speech saying: Name one thing. Some of my colleagues got a little mad, as I said, the best way to do that is to do the thing, deliver.

However, we are $36 trillion in debt. If we do everything I just said, if we renew the Trump tax cuts from 2017 and we extend them so that everybody's taxes—again, I am going back to my point, go to the status quo. If we do all of those things, then we will be struggling just to get to deficit neutrality on the issue, meaning we will still be at $2 trillion of debt a year.

Now, if Elon, Vivek and company can find a bunch of waste and we can cut that out and then we can use that to either bring back savings or maybe cut down on drugs or take that money and use it for additional things that would be better, say, the Pentagon. Okay, that is great, maybe we will save a little bit.

However, if you save 30 percent of our discretionary budget, let's say they go and they hack out just mountains of waste, fire bureaucrats, and one-third, 33 percent, of the discretionary budget just goes away, poof, that is about $600 billion. We are running about a $2 trillion deficit. I am just trying to put this in perspective.

I am for that.

Do you know why I am for it, Mr. Speaker?

Fire the bureaucrats, end the weaponization, end the waste, and end the people who are targeting us. Make them have to go out and get a real job. I am for all of those things, and our country would be better off. If we do it, then we will earn the right to deal with mandatory spending.

I said to some of my colleagues today in a meeting when Vivek and Elon were here, and I pointed out that we have a $113 billion bill on the floor for the disaster supplemental. I am pointing out that it is not going to be paid for. I am pointing out it is going to continue to perpetuate waste. I am talking about a bike path in Alaska, COVID spending across the country, and I think a church parking lot in Vermont. I mean, I could go down a laundry list of things that the current FEMA emergency funding is being used for, Mr. Speaker. Then we are going to just throw another $40 billion at it after we have been criticizing FEMA all through the fall about how incompetent they are and how bad they are.

We will say: Do you know what your reward is?

Here is more money, keep doing your bureaucratic thing. Don't worry, Elon and Vivek will save us. That is because we sure as hell aren't going to save us.

That is what we do.

My perspective is we should look in the mirror. We should do our job and constrain that spending. Don't give it to bureaucrats. Do our part. Find the savings and do what we can do to make it work.

However, do you know what my colleagues said?

My colleagues said: Well, CHIP, the discretionary spending doesn't matter because of the point I said a minute ago. If you cut one-third of it, then you save $600 billion, and you still have a $2 trillion deficit.

Why?

It is because we have made promises for at least one-half a century on Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid and increasingly on veterans' benefits that we can't keep up with. Then Republicans go around pounding their chest on tax policy: We will cut taxes so we will create economic growth. We will bring in revenue, and we will ignore the deficits.

I am for the tax cuts, but if you are not doing the spending cuts, then you end up with $36 trillion in debt.

Republicans need to look in the mirror. If my colleagues think we are going to just waltz in to a reconciliation debate in January and it is all going to be kumbaya because K Street wants tax cuts and because certain people think that they are going to get their bread buttered, but we are not going to focus on deficits, then I would just suggest that maybe they think long and hard about the calendar that the House put out whereby we are only here 3 days a week, 3 weeks a month, and maybe we should follow the Senate calendar, which to his great credit the incoming leader put out, 5 days a week every week for the first 3 months of the year.

We were elected to do something different, and by goodness, we are going to do something different. We must. We have no choice. Failure is not an option.

I will make just one other point in closing here as we deal with all of that on the spending issue. I watched the Senate Republicans doing this dance of hand-wringing and concern about the President's nominees.

The President was elected by the American people to change this town. He has nominated people who want to change this town. Mr. Speaker, if you want to go turn over every rock of everybody's past and then say that they are not capable or they don't deserve to serve in a position like Secretary of Defense as is currently occurring with the targeted attacks on Pete Hegseth, then maybe you should take the board out of your eye.

I am not saying that we don't have standards that are appropriate in the advise-and-consent process. We do, and we should. I am a believer in that separation of powers. However, the President also is deserving of the courtesy and the respect of his own party, in particular, of the individuals he is nominating to change the town.

He was elected to change it.

You don't like Tulsi because she is a Democrat?

Get over it. She is not anymore. She is a Republican now, but she was. In this Chamber, I served with her, she was a Democrat.

You don't like Bobby Kennedy because he is from an iconic Democrat family?

Get over it. I don't agree with Bobby Kennedy on a lot of different things, but I agree with him that we need to fundamentally change our healthcare system and that we need to make America healthy again.

I agree with Tulsi that we have been involved in endless wars and endless conflict that is draining our resources and undermining our men and women in uniform.

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I agree with Pete Hegseth that wokeism is destroying the United States military. I agree with Pete that we don't need to have endless wars. I agree with Pete that we ought to have somebody who has served in battle and understands it who is at the top of the Pentagon, rather than the brass, who, frankly, often like the ribbons more than actually doing the work that is necessary to defend this country.

I like the fact that we have people who the President is nominating who will take on the establishment and take on, for example, the FBI with Kash Patel.

The fact of the matter is we have Senators who are wanting to challenge it. For example, the Senator from Iowa who is going after Pete Hegseth, or seemingly, being critical. This is the same Senator, by the way, who voted for an NDAA that would draft our daughters and has been fighting to draft our daughters.

I tell her: You will do that over my dead body. There will be no draft of my daughter.

She voted for The Respect for Marriage Act to codify gay marriage. She went out to her constituents and talked about how the horrible Senate border bill was somehow a good bill and then scolded President Trump for opposing it. She voted for Garland for Attorney General, voted for Lloyd Austin for Defense, voted for Buttigieg for DOT, voted for Janet Yellen, voted for Ukraine's borders over America's borders.

With all due respect to the Senator from Iowa, she is not where the American people are. President Trump is, and Pete Hegseth is.

We have an obligation to change this town, or we are going to lose this country. If Republicans do not deliver and if we do not do what we said we would do, this party will end. There will not be a Republican Party if we fail in this term, this Congress, to deliver.

That is not hyperbole. It is true. We will go the way of the whigs. We will secure the border. We will return order to our streets. We will cut spending. We will move toward balancing our budgets.

As the President has nominated, we will confirm people who will change this town and take on the bureaucracy. We will listen to and work with Elon and Vivek, root out the waste and fraud, but do it ourselves.

We will pass bills that actually get the job done. We will undo the damage of the Biden administration, replace it with a legacy that our kids and grandkids can be proud of, root out the wokeism, root out all of the DEI and the critical race theory. Kill it. Kill it now.

We will do these things, or we will not exist. We will organize ourselves as a Conference to do those things, or we won't succeed.

Our job between now, the first week of December, and the first week of January is to get our heads in the right places. They currently aren't there.

We are not structured right now to deliver, and we have 1 month to do it. That is my calling. We are not here to take breaks. We are not here for codels. We are not here for trips. We are here to get the job done.

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

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Kevin F. McCumber, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2950. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the Coastal Program of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to work with willing partners and provide support to efforts to assess, protect, restore, and enhance important coastal landscapes that provide fish and wildlife habitat on which certain Federal trust species depend, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5302. An act to designate the Air and Marine Operations Marine Unit of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection located at 101 Km 18.5 in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico, as the ''Michel O. Maceda Marine Unit''.

H.R. 5536. An act to require transparency in notices of funding opportunity, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5799. An act to designate the checkpoint of the United States Border Patrol located on United States Highway 90 West in Uvalde County, Texas, as the ''James R. Dominguez Border Patrol Checkpoint''.

H.R. 7218. An act to amend title III of the Public Health Service Act to extend the program for promotion of public health knowledge and awareness of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7438. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the FIFA World Cup 2026, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7764. An act to establish a commission to study the potential transfer of the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History to the Smithsonian Institution, and for other purposes.

H.R. 8932. An act to establish an earlier application processing cycle for the FAFSA.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title.

S. 3960.—An act to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide a good faith exception to the imposition of fines for false assertions and certifications, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 33 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, December 6, 2024, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

EC–6299. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Department Notification Number: DDTC 24-072, pursuant to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–6300. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Department Notification Number: DDTC 24-071, pursuant to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC–6301. A letter from the Chief Regulatory Officer, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security and Department of Labor, transmitting the Departments' temporary rule — Exercise of Time-Limited Authority To Increase the Numerical Limitation for FY 2025 for the H-2B Temporary Nonagricultural Worker Program and Portability Flexibility for H-2B Workers Seeking To Change Employers [CIS No.: 2788-25] (RIN: 1615-AC95); [DOL Docket No.: ETA-2024-0002] (RIN: 1205-AC20) received December 2, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–6302. A letter from the Associate Administrator for Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's ''Interagency Waster Workforce Working Group Report to Congress'', pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 300j-19e(c)(4)(B); Public Law 115-270, title IV, Sec. 4304(4)(B) (as added by Public Law 117-58, Sec. 50211(2)(D)); (135 Stat. 1171); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC–6303. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's interim final action — Medicare Program; Changes to the Fiscal Year 2025 Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS) Rates Due to Court Decision [CMS-1808-IFC] (RIN: 0938-AV34) received October 2, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 3284. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to submit an annual report on the impact of certain Medicare regulations on provider and payer consolidation, with an amendment (Rept. 118–765, Pt. 2). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. McHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 3378. A bill to amend the Defense Production Act of 1950 to include the Secretary of Agriculture as a member of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–798, Pt 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 6322. A bill to evaluate and disrupt financing to Hamas, and to amend title 31, United States Code, to prohibit the exchange stabilization fund from being used to deal in Special Drawing Rights from state sponsors of terrorism, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–799, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 8302. A bill to establish a commission to review the programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and make recommendations for legislative reforms, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–800, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 5409. A bill to amend the Defense Production Act of 1950 to require the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to determine whether a national security review is needed for reportable agricultural land transactions referred by the Secretary of Agriculture, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–801, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 5557. A bill to impose sanctions against certain persons engaged in the proliferation or use of foreign commercial spyware, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–802, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 6000. A bill to freeze $6,000,000,000 of Iranian funds held in Qatar, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–803, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 760. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to Communist Chinese military and surveillance companies; with an amendment (Rept. 118–804, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 5523. A bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to include information in the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report on improvements by countries in combating narcotics-related money laundering, to require a report on the consistency of Bank Secrecy Act examinations, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–805, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 5945. A bill to reinstate certain sanctions imposed with respect to Iran; with an amendment (Rept. 118–806, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 9313. A bill to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to report to Congress on the compliance under the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 of all office buildings under the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the General Services Administration, and for other purposes (Rept. 118–807). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 9541. A bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to authorize Federal agencies to provide certain essential assistance for hazard mitigation for electric utilities, and for other purposes (Rept. 118–808). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 6083. A bill to amend the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 to extend waiver of duplicate benefits limitation for certain payments to individuals in the event of a major disaster, and for other purposes (Rept. 118–809). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 9591. A bill to require the Administrator of General Services to sell certain property related to United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, and for other purposes (Rept. 118–810). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 9750. A bill to authorize the President to provide disaster assistance to States and Indian Tribes under a major disaster recovery program, and for other purposes, with an amendment (Rept. 118–811). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 9037. A bill to require the development of a workforce plan for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (Rept. 118–812). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 9024. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to take certain actions relating to incident periods and extreme weather, and for other purposes, with an amendment (Rept. 118–813). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 2892. A bill to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on the effectiveness of local alerting systems, and for other purposes, with amendments (Rept. 118–814). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 6984. A bill to designate the Federal building located at 300 E. 3rd Street in North Platte, Nebraska, as the ''Virginia Smith Federal Building'', and for other purposes (Rept. 118–815). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 8728. A bill to establish alternate procedures for lump sum payments for certain covered small disasters, and for other purposes, with an amendment (Rept. 118–816). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 9121. A bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to allow Indian Tribal Governments to directly request fire management assistance declarations and grants, and for other purposes (Rept. 118–817). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 8530. A bill to require Facility Security Committees to respond to security recommendations issued by the Federal Protective Service relating to facility security, and for other purposes (Rept. 118–818). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 6435. A bill to ensure that a declaration for a major disaster or emergency is made on a timely basis, rural areas receive assistance, and for other purposes (Rept. 118–819). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 9749. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to abolish the reorganization authority of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes (Rept. 118–820). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 4406. A bill to require reporting regarding accreditation of basic training programs of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes (Rept. 118–821 Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McHENRY: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 1165. A bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to modernize the protection of the nonpublic personal information of individuals with whom financial institutions have customer or consumer relationship, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118–822). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

TIME LIMITATION OF REFERRED BILLS

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XII, the following actions were taken by the Speaker:

H.R. 3378. Referral to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Foreign Affairs extended for a period ending not later than December 19, 2024.

H.R. 4406. Referral to the Committee on the Judiciary extended for a period ending not later than December 19, 2024.

H.R. 5409. Referral to the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Energy and Commerce extended for a period ending not later than December 19, 2024.

H.R. 6322. Referral to the Committee on Foreign Affairs extended for a period ending not later than December 19, 2024.

H.R. 8302. Referral to the Committee on Rules extended for a period ending not later than December 19, 2024.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CLYDE (for himself, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mrs. HARSHBARGER, Mr. BURLISON, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MOONEY, Mr. OGLES, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Mr. ROY, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. CRANE, Mr. GOOD of Virginia, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. CLOUD, Mr. ESTES, Mr. BRECHEEN, Mr. OWENS, Mr. GRIFFITH, and Mr. KUSTOFF):

H.R. 10299. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to prohibit Federal financial participation for gun violence prevention or intervention programs under the Medicaid program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. BICE (for herself, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, Mr. ESTES, Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. MEUSER, Ms. MALOY,

Mr. OWENS, Mr. BABIN, Mr. LUTTRELL, Mr. BARR, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. ALLEN, Ms. VAN DUYNE, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. CLYDE, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mrs. HINSON, and Mr. MANN):

H.R. 10300. A bill to provide for congressional review of rules with respect to which the agency explicitly relied on Chevron deference in the notice of proposed rulemaking or a Federal court upheld the rule based on Chevron deference; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Accountability, Rules, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 10301. A bill to require the Secretary of the Army to accelerate actions necessary to carry out caisson services at Arlington National Cemetery; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas (for herself and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 10302. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to allow employers to contribute to ABLE accounts in lieu of retirement plan contributions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Ms. BONAMICI, and Ms. TLAIB):

H.R. 10303. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a grant program to assist projects that use nonlethal coexistence measures to reduce property damage caused by native beavers, a keystone species, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. FROST (for himself and Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK):

H.R. 10304. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to revise section 61.206 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, to approve certain distribution or use of phosphogypsum, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GARBARINO (for himself, Mrs. HARSHBARGER, and Mr. SUOZZI):

H.R. 10305. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to exempt certain drugs from the part D manufacturer discount program under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GOOD of Virginia:

H.R. 10306. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to issue a right-of-way for an emergency exit on certain National Park Service land in the State of Virginia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HORSFORD (for himself, Ms. HOULAHAN, and Ms. SALAZAR):

H.R. 10307. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to carry out a pilot program under which a TRICARE Prime beneficiary may access obstetrical and gynecological care without a referral, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin (for herself, Mr. WIED, Mr. STEIL, Mr. POCAN, Mr. VAN ORDEN, Mr. FITZGERALD, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. TIFFANY, and Ms. VAN DUYNE):

H.R. 10308. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow for payments to certain individuals who dye fuel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. OGLES:

H.R. 10309. A bill to make certain funds available to provide assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act in response to Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RASKIN (for himself and Mr. KILEY):

H.R. 10310. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to establish a procedure to dismiss and deter strategic lawsuits against public participation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 10311. A bill to provide a private right of action for persons harmed by violations of the Franchise Rule of the Federal Trade Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SHERRILL:

H.R. 10312. A bill to authorize workforce development innovation grants for the implementation, expansion, and evaluation of evidence-based workforce programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. SHERRILL:

H.R. 10313. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the automatic extension of residential leases during the deployment of the lessee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. STANSBURY (for herself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. OMAR, Ms. BALINT, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 10314. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a National Resilience and Recovery Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. STEUBE (for himself, Mr. NEHLS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. TIFFANY):

H.R. 10315. A bill to withhold bilateral, multilateral, and humanitarian non-defense foreign assistance with respect to which of the President has declared a disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia (for herself, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, and Mrs. BEATTY):

H.R. 10316. A bill to amend the Equal Credit Opportunity Act to require creditors to consider certain additional credit information when making mortgage loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CASTEN:

H. Res. 1608. A resolution directing the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives to release to the public the committee's report on its investigation into allegations against former Representative Matt Gaetz; to the Committee on Ethics.

By Mr. COHEN:

H. Res. 1609. A resolution directing the Committee on Ethics to preserve and release records of the Committee's review of the alleged misconduct of Matthew Louis Gaetz II of Florida while serving as a Member of the House of Representatives; to the Committee on Ethics.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

ML-156. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of New Hampshire, relative to House Resolution 22, urging the Congress to remove the exception from the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution: ''except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted''; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY AND SINGLE SUBJECT STATEMENTS

Pursuant to clause 7(c)(1) of rule XII and Section 3(c) of H.Res. 5 the following statements are submitted regarding (1) the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution and (2) the single subject of the bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. CLYDE:

H.R. 10299.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution states the Congress shall have the power ''to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

The single subject of this legislation is:

Prohibits federal funds from going to ''gun violence prevention programs or gun violence intervention programs'' under the Medicaid program

By Mrs. BICE:

H.R. 10300.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To provide for congressional review of rules with respect to which the agency explicitly relied on Chevron deference in the notice of proposed rulemaking or a Federal court upheld the rule based on Chevron deference.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 10301.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is.

To require the Secretary of the Army to accelerate actions necessary to carry out caisson services at Arlington National Cemetery.

By Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas:

H.R. 10302.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend the Internal Revenue Code to allow employers to contribue to ABLE accounts in lieu of retirement plan contributions.

By Ms. DELLBENE:
H.R. 10303.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
The single subject of this legislation is:
This bill creates a non-lethal beaver coexistence measures pilot grant program.

By Mr. FROST:
H.R. 10304.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and 18 of the U.S. Constitution
The single subject of this legislation is:
To direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to revise section 61.206 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, to approve certain distribution or use of phosphogypsum, and for other purposes.

By Mr. GARBARINO:
H.R. 10305.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Art. 1, Sec. 8.
The single subject of this legislation is:
The bill would exempt certain drugs from the part D manufacturer discount program under the Medicare program.

By Mr. GOOD of Virginia:
H.R. 10306.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I Section VIII
The single subject of this legislation is:
To direct the Department of Interior to issue a right-of-way permit for an emergency road, provided certain conditions are met

By Mr. HORSFORD:
H.R. 10307.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution
The Single Subject of this legislation is:
This legislation will implement a pilot program to remove the requirement for TRICARE Prime participants to receive a referral for obstetric and gynecologic care and services.

By Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin:
H.R. 10308.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Sections 7 & 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.
The single subject of this legislation is:
Federal taxation

By Mr. OGLES:
H.R. 10309.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section VIII of the United States Constitution
The single subject of this legislation is:
Makes certain funds available to provide assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act in response to Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton, and for other purposes.

By Mr. RASKIN:
H.R. 10310.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
The single subject of this legislation is:
To amend title 28, United States Code, to establish a procedure to dismiss and deter strategic lawsuits against public participation.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY:
H.R. 10311.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.
The single subject of this legislation is:
Creates a private right of action for individuals harmed by violations of the Federal Trade Commission's Franchise Rule. The rule requires franchisors to disclose certain relevant information to prospective franchisees.

By Ms. SHERRILL:
H.R. 10312.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution of the United States of America
The single subject of this legislation is:
Funding evidence-based workforce development programs to boost jobs and wages for working families

By Ms. SHERRILL:
H.R. 10313.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Fourteenth Amendment, Section 5
The single subject of this legislation is:
To amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the automatic extension of residential leases during the deployment of the lessee, and for other purposes.

By Ms. STANSBURY:
H.R. 10314.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution
The single subject of this legislation is:
To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a National Resilience and Recovery Fund, and for other purposes.

By Mr. STEUBE:
H.R. 10315.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1
The single subject of this legislation is:
To withhold bilateral, multilateral, and humanitarian non-defense foreign assistance with respect to which of the President has declared a disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

By Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia:
H.R. 10316.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.
The single subject of this legislation is:
This bill requires the consideration of additional credit information by a mortgage lender when evaluating a consumer's creditworthiness if a consumer requests that this information be considered. This additional information includes current payment and transaction information such as bank statements and rental payment history.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 15: Mrs. LEE CARTER.
H.R. 33: Ms. STANSBURY.
H.R. 205: Ms. MCCLELLAN.
H.R. 531: Mr. ROSE.
H.R. 549: Mr. VASQUEZ.
H.R. 1222: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 1249: Mr. OGLES.
H.R. 1561: Mr. MCCORMICK.
H.R. 1666: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 1671: Ms. STANSBURY.
H.R. 1728: Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 1732: Mr. PFLUGER.
H.R. 1787: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 2414: Mr. LANDSMAN.
H.R. 2730: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 2802: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 2955: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 2992: Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3124: Mr. HARRIS.
H.R. 3503: Ms. STANSBURY.
H.R. 3610: Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 3875: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 3923: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4006: Mr. CLINE.
H.R. 4189: Mr. LANDSMAN.
H.R. 4249: Ms. BROWNLEY.
H.R. 4263: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4285: Mr. TORRES of New York.
H.R. 4896: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin and Mr. CASE.
H.R. 4987: Mr. AMO.
H.R. 5012: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 5200: Mr. RULLI.
H.R. 5308: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 5459: Ms. SPANBERGER.
H.R. 5547: Mr. MORELLE and Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 5563: Ms. UNDERWOOD.
H.R. 5685: Mrs. MCIVER.
H.R. 5725: Ms. MALLIOTAKIS.
H.R. 5785: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 5995: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 6041: Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.
H.R. 6415: Mr. LANDSMAN.
H.R. 6759: Ms. HOULAHAN.
H.R. 6950: Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 7002: Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 7039: Mrs. MCBATH, Mrs. SYKES, and Mr. KIM of New Jersey.
H.R. 7132: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 7174: Mr. JAMES.
H.R. 7248: Ms. TENNEY.
H.R. 7297: Mr. SORENSEN.
H.R. 7416: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 7442: Ms. TOKUDA.
H.R. 7481: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 7779: Ms. CARAVEO and Mr. CRANE.
H.R. 7820: Ms. MCCLELLAN.
H.R. 7905: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 8147: Mr. GREEN of Tennessee and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.R. 8390: Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 8492: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 8753: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. FITZGERALD.
H.R. 8977: Ms. TOKUDA.
H.R. 8996: Mr. MAGAZINER.
H.R. 9094: Ms. TOKUDA.
H.R. 9096: Mr. LANDSMAN.
H.R. 9233: Ms. STANSBURY.
H.R. 9263: Mr. CAREY.
H.R. 9272: Mr. FERGUSON.
H.R. 9297: Mr. NUNN of Iowa.
H.R. 9382: Mr. BALDERSON.
H.R. 9535: Mr. OBERNOLTE.
H.R. 9581: Mr. LANDSMAN.
H.R. 9602: Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 9647: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
H.R. 9689: Mr. GARBARINO.
H.R. 9855: Mr. CROW.
H.R. 9912: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 9950: Mr. ALFORD.
H.R. 10017: Ms. TOKUDA.
H.R. 10045: Ms. CROCKETT, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. STAUBER, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.
H.R. 10073: Ms. STEVENS, Ms. TOKUDA, and Mr. MRVAN.
H.R. 10103: Mr. KILEY.
H.R. 10186: Mr. MOORE of Alabama.
H.R. 10215: Ms. TOKUDA.
H.R. 10230: Mr. DELUZIO and Ms. STANSBURY.
H.R. 10257: Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 10268: Ms. TITUS and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 10284: Mr. PERRY and Mr. BRECHEEN.
H.R. 10287: Ms. SÁNCHEZ and Mrs. HAYES.
H. Res. 1350: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H. Res. 1545: Mrs. TORRES of California and Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Author of Life, who put into our hearts such deep desires that we cannot be at peace until we rest in You, mercifully guide our lawmakers on the path of Your choosing. May Your Holy Word be for them a lamp and a light in these challenging times. Lord, keep them mindful of the importance of being people of integrity, striving to please You in all that they do. Make them women and men of principle, who share a strong vision of a godly nation with a promising future. May their humility match Your willingness to help them and their dependence on You liberate them from anxiety about what the future holds.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The senior assistant executive clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, December 5, 2024.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant executive clerk read the nomination of Tiffany Rene Johnson, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO SCOTT RAAB

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, every year, scores of bright young people arrive on Capitol Hill to begin careers of public service. On the whole, they tend to be bright, ambitious, principled, and patriotic. I have been fortunate to have the best of them on my team.

But I am certain no one has ever shown up on day one better prepared to advocate for a State he is not from than my deputy chief of staff of policy, Scott Raab.

From the moment he walked in the door in 1999, Scott knew as much about my legislative record and about Kentucky's priorities as anyone on the team. Before long, he was fluent in the Commonwealth's smallest towns and counties. Somewhere along the way, he turned into a rabid fan of Kentucky basketball. And for years, new arrivals to my staff in the Republican leader office have consistently mistaken this honorary son of the Bluegrass for a native one.

I say all this to make it clear the kind of person we are dealing with. This is the sort of friend and adviser that simply doesn't grow on trees: the natural whiz who still studies relentlessly; the wonk whose expertise runs both deep and wide; the man for whom loyalty is not a transactional currency but a way of life; and, of course, the champion of ''Blue Shirt Thursday'' and the only member of my staff who can pull off the bow tie.

This exceedingly rare breed—this is Scott Raab. As my policy director, there is no topic that falls outside his portfolio. And there is no problem that isn't, in some way, his to solve.

This is hardly a recent development, and it is certainly not by accident. After just a few years on my personal office staff, through steady and unassuming competence, Scott became a clearinghouse for input on important decisions. Our entire team leaned on his encyclopedic knowledge, his good judgment, and, of course, his upset picks for March Madness brackets.

For much of Scott's tenure, his colleagues turned to him as a resident expert on healthcare policy. He had to protect my blind side on a set of issues I confess have always confounded me. But when you are as good as Scott is at boiling complex problems down to their essence, you wind up pulling extra duty. It didn't matter if an issue

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wasn't in his portfolio. If it was really hard and really important, it, of course, would wind up on Scott's desk.

Eventually, as is often the case with the greatest flying aces, it fell to Scott to lead the whole squadron, to marshal the strengths and expertise of my entire team, and to deploy them in pursuit of an outcome. There have been very few outcomes Scott has pursued and not achieved. And that is because he is one of the very few people in Washington who, by their very involvement in an issue, signal that things are probably going to somehow work out.

I am speaking, of course, about Scott's daily arrival to light and tend the fireplace in my chief of staff's office. In meetings anywhere in the Capitol, Scott speaks with my authority but a command of policy nuance and procedural nuance entirely his own.

Without uttering a word, Scott's patrols along the back wall of this Chamber are a sign to our colleagues things are under control—or at least they will be very soon.

Scott, of course, is too modest to acknowledge this. He is too self-effacing to admit the number of times where the price of rescuing must-pass legislation or keeping the Federal Government's lights on has been his nights, his weekends, and his all-hours attention.

For a husband and father with a young family, it is difficult to quantify this sacrifice. It is impossible to overstate how the road to high-stakes government funding agreements has so often been paved with missed swim meets and soccer games and with goodnight calls and bedtime stories over FaceTime illustrated with a Cookie Monster hand puppet.

So I am grateful to Scott's dear wife Katherine for her patience and to Molly and Lauren for sharing their dad with us so often.

There is simply no way to make sense of the quarter century of honorable service Scott has rendered without talking about a certain intangible devotion. You don't stick around that long for the pay. You certainly don't do it for the flexible hours. But if your name is Scott Raab, you might just do it because you love the Senate and believe in the people you work with.

As it so happens, Scott's colleagues over the years have believed in him too. They say that ''his input was essential''; that he would be ''the person in my will to take care of my kids''; that he ''does the right thing the right way''; and that they are ''proud to call him [their] friend.''

Well, I am as well.

I am going to miss staring down the toughest fights with Scott Raab at my side. But if anyone is entitled to cut the net down and walk out of here satisfied they left it all on the court, it is Scott.

So Scott, thanks for everything.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

FBI BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I served on the Senate Judiciary Committee for over 20 years, including the last 4 as chairman.

During that time, I voted on thousands of judicial U.S. attorneys, U.S. marshals, and Justice Department nominees.

Every nominee who has gone through our committee—everyone—shares one thing in common, whether nominated by a Democrat or a Republican President, every single nominee has undergone an FBI background investigation—everyone.

President-elect Trump has the right to nominate his preferred candidates for Justice Department and judicial vacancies, but the Judiciary Committee plays a critical role in offering advice and consent on nominations, which includes receiving and reviewing the results of FBI background investigations.

After weeks of reports that President-elect Trump planned to bypass the FBI entirely, it was a relief to hear that the Trump transition team had finally signed an agreement this week to allow the FBI to conduct background investigations.

But I remain concerned about whether President-elect Trump will require all his appointees to undergo the process. Listen to what the New York Times reported:

> Despite the signing of the agreement, it remains unclear whether [the] Trump's team plans to send the names of all officials requiring a security clearance or Senate confirmation to the F.B.I. for vetting.

If President-elect Trump's nominees are not required to submit to the same FBI vetting procedure as previous nominees, it makes you wonder what they are hiding.

The practice of the FBI conducting background investigations is not a new idea. The nominations investigations of the President's nominees dates back 70 years to the Eisenhower administration, and it applies to every Senate-confirmed position, including more than 1,200 positions in the executive branch, 900 Federal judicial nominees, 93 U.S. attorney nominees, and 94 U.S. marshal nominees. Every single one is subject to an FBI investigation.

You might ask yourself, Why is it so important to vet all these nominees? Consider the views of Noah Bookbinder and Gregg Nunziata, former Democratic and Republican counsels on the Senate Judiciary Committee, who, on a bipartisan basis, reviewed hundreds of nominees' background investigations.

They wrote in the New York Times:

> Without nominees being scrutinized by the F.B.I., the danger is that neither lawmakers nor the public would know whether they are trustworthy or have issues that compromise their ability to do the job or [even] their loyalty to the United States.

As Mr. Bookbinder and Nunziata noted in their op-ed:

> A nomination was never scheduled for committee consideration without the committee receiving an F.B.I. background check, reviewing it and clearing the nomination to move forward.

By design, positions that require Senate confirmation are of great importance. These individuals make critical decisions that protect America, our national security, and affect many thousands of American lives, including who is investigated, who is charged with a crime, and how the justice system operates.

It is absolutely critical that people nominated to these positions are upstanding citizens who can be trusted with sensitive life-or-death government information, people who will be immune to blackmail or foreign influence and are truly loyal to the United States.

President-elect Trump has reportedly considered using a private investigative firm to conduct these background investigations. That is unacceptable for one basic reason. First, when the nominees submit their paperwork to the FBI as a part of their background investigations, they are on notice that lying or concealing material facts is a felony—a felony. The same goes for individuals who agree to speak with the FBI about nominees' character and fitness. In comparison, there would be no penalties for misleading a private investigative firm.

Second, the FBI's resources in determining if a nominee poses a risk far outweigh any private firm's capabilities. Seasoned agents at the FBI field offices nationwide are deployed to pull records, interview individuals, and report their findings.

Finally, any private firm paid by the Trump transition team would have an unavoidable conflict of interest. They would have an incentive to clear the backgrounds of nominees so they would get more business from the transition team. By contrast, the only motive for FBI agents is honoring their oath to the Constitution.

It is the duty of President-elect Trump to pick nominees of his choosing. It is also the duty of the Senate, under the Constitution, to carefully examine the record of each nominee before this body. To fulfill this constitutional duty of advice and consent on nominations, the Judiciary Committee must continue to receive background investigations conducted by the FBI for every single nominee.

We owe the American people a transparent transition of power, but that is only possible if the incoming administration follows longstanding, established practices ensuring that the President's nominees can be trusted in a position of power.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior executive assistant clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, today the Senate will continue doing what we have been doing all week, working to confirm as many of President Biden's well-qualified judicial nominees as possible.

Yesterday, we confirmed two more district court judges for the Northern District of New York—Anthony Brindisi, a proud son of Utica whom I worked with closely when he was a member of Congress, and Beth Coombe, a trailblazing prosecutor.

Later this morning, we will vote to confirm Sarah Davenport to be district court judge for the District of New Mexico. Following that, we will vote to advance the nominations of two more judges: Tiffany Johnson to be the district court judge for the Northern District of Georgia and Keli Neary to be district court judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

So of the five judges I filed cloture on Monday, we will have confirmed three by the end of today, and we will be very close to confirming the remaining two. While Democrats still hold the majority, we are going to do everything we can to confirm as many judges as we can.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE S. HELMY

Mr. President, now, on Senator HELMY, today we say thank you and farewell to another member of our caucus, the junior Senator from New Jersey, Senator GEORGE HELMY. Senator HELMY will resign this weekend to make way for our new colleague, Senator-elect ANDY KIM, who we are all very excited to get to work with.

In a very short amount of time, Senator HELMY put his name on over 30 pieces of legislation, advocated for children's mental health, stood up for the well-being of the people of New Jersey, across America, and around the world. I would also be remiss if I didn't point out that Senator HELMY never hesitated to preside during pro forma sessions, a thankless but necessary job.

Senator HELMY's service will also be remembered for its historical significance. He was the first Senator from the Coptic Church. Senator HELMY's faith had an immediate and direct impact here in the Senate when he invited His Grace Bishop David of the Diocese of New York and New England to the Senate a few weeks ago to deliver the first ever Senate opening prayer by a member of the Coptic Orthodox Church.

So Senator HELMY, congratulations on a job well-done. You made New Jersey proud. We wish you and your family the best.

TRIBUTE TO MITT ROMNEY

Mr. President, finally, I wish to pay tribute and say thank you to a colleague from across the aisle, Senator MITT ROMNEY, who delivered his farewell address yesterday. I enjoyed meeting Senator ROMNEY's family, his sons and his wife, at his reception the other night and told him how much I respected him and how much we will miss him in the Senate.

On most issues, Senator ROMNEY and I may have seemed like oil and water. But I have always appreciated him for his decency, his commitment to our country, and his willingness to work in good faith in a bipartisan way when the chance presented itself. And over the last 4 years, we found numerous ways to do just that.

Senator ROMNEY was a good partner with me on COVID relief legislation, despite much opposition from the other side. And he helped build consensus on the infrastructure bill. He also remains a fierce defender of the Ukrainian people.

Finally, I will always appreciate that Senator ROMNEY joined me, alongside Senators ROSEN, KELLY, and CASSIDY, on our mission to Israel in the aftermath of October 7. So thank you, Senator ROMNEY, and I wish you and your family the best in a new chapter in your life.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. President, a few days ago I sent Senator THUNE a letter asking that we go through the regular advice and consent process. That meant full FBI investigations of every nominee, the Senate be able to look at those, hearings with questions in the Senate on every nominee, and then votes on the floor.

I am glad to see that at least the President-elect's administration is beginning to look at the FBI investigation issue, and that is a small step in the right direction. But we must have them for all nominees, they must be full FBI investigations, and they must be available for Senators to look at. And, of course, the necessity of hearings for each nominee, the necessity of votes on each nominee are just consonant with the advice and consent process that we have done in America for decades and decades and decades under Democratic and Republican Presidents and the like.

I hope there will be no deviation from that grand and useful tradition.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Republican whip.

TRIBUTE TO MITT ROMNEY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, one of the drawbacks of the end of a Congress is the need to say goodbye to departing colleagues. We are losing two Republicans this year—Senators MITT ROMNEY and MIKE BRAUN.

MITT gave his farewell remarks yesterday, and they were characteristic of the man I have come to know: humble, faith-filled, patriotic. MITT is what I would call a character guy. He is guided by a moral compass, and he is not afraid to live by it. And in a world where being religious isn't always highly regarded, he is unapologetic about his faith.

MITT is also a big family guy. Like me, he married up, and he and his wife Ann have shared the good times and the tough times for well now over 50 years of marriage—hard to believe to look at him. But they say children keep you young, and MITT has 5 sons and an incredible 25 grandchildren—a beautiful legacy all on its own.

MITT's professional legacy needs no recounting. He is well known as a successful businessman, a successful Republican Governor of a deep-blue State, and most recently as a successful Senator. He may be leaving us after just one term, but that term was filled with an outsized amount of work, and he has more than earned his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE BRAUN

Mr. President, in addition to MITT, MIKE BRAUN is leaving us at the end of this Congress, in his case to go and serve as the Governor of Indiana. MIKE is another guy who has had an outsized impact here in the Senate in a short amount time. In fact, he was named the most effect first-term Republican Senator in the 117th Congress—and no surprise.

It was clear from the beginning that MIKE came here because he wanted to get things done. Now he will bring that same drive and effectiveness—the drive and effectiveness that helped him grow a small business with 15 employees into a national company—to his work as Governor of Indiana. I have no doubt at all that the State will thrive under his leadership.

As I may have told MIKE, ''Hoosiers'' is one of my top five movies of all time, which has automatically made me a big fan of the Hoosier State. So I look forward to seeing all the great things that are going to happen to Indiana during his tenure. I know he will be incredibly busy as Governor, especially because MIKE is a guy that gives his all to what he does—witness the fact that he has visited all 92 of Indiana's counties every year during his time here in the Senate.

But I hope he will still find time for his beloved mushroom hunting, and I know he will be finding time to spend with his wife Maureen and their four children—three of whom work for the family business—as well as with their seven grandchildren.

MIKE, congratulations on your election as Governor. It has been a pleasure to work with you here in the Senate, and I look forward to seeing all the great things you will do in Indiana.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Mark Eskenazi's and Amanda Wood Laihow's nominations to the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

I want to note for my colleagues that the Commission has not had a quorum since April of 2023 and, as a result, has been unable to decide cases for more than a year. Delays with the Commission's cases create significant risks to workers, and that is, in part, because, when an employer appeals a citation, they don't have to fix the alleged hazard until the Commission issues a final decision.

Mr. Eskenazi is currently an Assistant General Counsel at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and previously has held numerous positions at the National Labor Relations Board.

This is Ms. Wood Laihow's second nomination to the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. She was previously confirmed in January of 2020. Prior to her role on this Commission, she has served as the director of labor and employment policy for the National Association of Manufacturers and as deputy general counsel for the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

I support this bipartisan pair of nominees that will allow the Commission to have a quorum, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 374 and 785; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I am disappointed that my Republican colleague has blocked the confirmations of these nominees. These nominees have been held up since last year, and it is time to end these delays and confirm these nominees.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask that the scheduled vote occur immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Sarah Morgan Davenport, of New Mexico, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Mexico.

NOMINATION OF SARAH MORGAN DAVENPORT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Sarah Davenport to the U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico.

Ms. Davenport's impressive career as a dedicated public servant for nearly two decades, combined with her Federal court experience, will make her an excellent addition to the Federal bench.

After earning her bachelor of music from New Mexico State University and her J.D. from the University of New Mexico School of Law, Ms. Davenport began her legal career at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Mexico, where she has spent the entirety of her career.

Ms. Davenport first served as a law clerk for the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force Unit. She then served as a special assistant U.S. attorney, where she prosecuted drug trafficking, immigration, and firearms offenses. In 2009, Ms. Davenport became an assistant U.S. attorney, primarily handling complex drug trafficking and money laundering investigations.

Since 2022, she has served as a supervisory assistant U.S. attorney, where she oversees prosecutors in her office who handle immigration, firearms, drug trafficking, white collar, and violent crime offenses.

Ms. Davenport has the strong support of her home State Senators, Mr. HEINRICH and Mr. LUJÁN. In addition, Ms. Davenport was rated unanimously ''qualified'' by the American Bar Association.

I urge my colleagues to support Ms. Davenport's nomination.

VOTE ON DAVENPORT NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Davenport nomination?

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 314 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin	Cardin	Durbin
Bennet	Carper	Fetterman
Blumenthal	Casey	Gillibrand
Booker	Collins	Hassan
Brown	Coons	Heinrich
Butler	Cortez Masto	Helmy
Cantwell	Duckworth	Hickenlooper
Hirono	Murray	Stabenow
Kaine	Ossoff	Tester
Kelly	Padilla	Van Hollen
King	Peters	Warner
Klobuchar	Reed	Warnock
Luján	Rosen	Warren
Manchin	Sanders	Welch
Markey	Schatz	Whitehouse
Merkley	Schumer	Wyden
Murkowski	Shaheen	
Murphy	Smith	

NAYS—45

Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blackburn	Graham	Ricketts
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Braun	Hagerty	Romney
Britt	Hawley	Rounds
Budd	Hoeven	Rubio
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Mullin	Young

NOT VOTING—3

Moran	Sinema	Vance

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 845, Tiffany Rene Johnson, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tammy Duckworth, Ben Ray Luján, Patty Murray, Alex Padilla, Peter Welch, Jeff Merkley, Richard Blumenthal, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher A. Coons, Debbie Stabenow, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Elizabeth Warren, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jack Reed, Tim Kaine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Tiffany Rene Johnson, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator

from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 315 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Helmy	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Butler	Kelly	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Smith
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Luján	Tester
Casey	Manchin	Van Hollen
Coons	Markey	Warner
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warnock
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Welch
Fetterman	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	

NAYS—45

Barrasso	Fischer	Murkowski
Blackburn	Graham	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Ricketts
Braun	Hagerty	Risch
Britt	Hawley	Romney
Budd	Hoeven	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Mullin	Young

NOT VOTING—5

Cornyn	Rubio	Vance
Moran	Sinema	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELMY). The yeas are 50, the nays are 45.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Keli Marie Neary, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Ms. BUTLER. Mr. President, I rise to join in the honored tradition of the Senate to offer my final floor remarks before departing.

Interestingly, I rise to let the pages know that, breaking traditional Senate practice, there are no written remarks for you to come pick up. I decided just this morning that I was going to write a different speech, that I was going to offer words of my own as I mark what is the end of a journey for me.

As I end this journey as the junior Senator representing 40 million Californians, it is a day that I want to thank them and thank Governor Newsom for giving me the honor and privilege of serving our great State.

It has been a remarkable honor, a completely unimagined adventure to follow in the footsteps of Dianne Feinstein, who so ably served in this Chamber for more than 30 years, and to be blessed to walk the same hallways as Senator Carol Moseley Braun and share the same office space as Vice President KAMALA HARRIS. It truly has been an unbelievable privilege.

Indeed, the footsteps that I have had the opportunity to follow in this walk of service have been filled with decency, honor, integrity, and courage. I can only hope that for the people of California, I was able to do half as well as those who came before me.

As is true for all of us and for those who came before, this journey of public service is not one that we travel alone. Along with us, on the rough side of the mountain, is our staff, the staff who work so hard to help keep the pace, who help to plot the path and bring all of the supplies and make sure that no one is lost or left behind.

I want to thank my capable, incredibly talented staff for making sure that we never lost sight of our North Star, the people of California. They have given not only their hard work and long hours but their brilliant minds and all of their hearts to make sure that the last 14 months have truly been impactful. For all of that, I will forever be grateful.

I know that it is most often true that in the traversing of the roads of service, it is often our family and our friends who serve as the fuel that keeps us going day by day. That has been certainly true for me.

My wife and daughter—Neneki and Nylah—have refilled my tank and refilled my cup at the moments that I thought that I was running low. So to them, I am grateful for never letting me run out.

To my mother, who has watched more C–SPAN in the last 14 months than in all of her 71 years, my brothers, my sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, and dear friends, just when the clouds get low and start to look a little heavy, it has been your cards, your texts, your letters, your visits to DC that truly have brought out the sunshine. So, to all of you, I am deeply grateful and cannot thank you enough.

To my colleagues and fellow travelers, you have truly made this journey special. The old quote by Tim Cahill that says ''A journey is best measured in friends rather than miles'' is true for me. You have all given me so much to make this journey one to enjoy. It could not have been more true in my short time. I don't have the years or been able to plot the miles of any of my colleagues who have spoken up to this point as they prepare to leave, but I have had the opportunity to build what I believe will be lifelong friendships along this entire journey, and for that—on both sides of the aisle—I truly know that I am grateful.

I want to give a special shout-out to my senior Senator ALEX PADILLA and his kind and generous comments from yesterday. He has been like a tour guide on this incredible ride, always carrying the compass, making sure I don't stray too far off the path but knowing full well that I am a traveler who is intent on walking her own way. Senator PADILLA has supported me all along the journey, and I am grateful.

I know that Senator-elect SCHIFF is here, and I appreciate him and his support throughout this transition and also a special call to Leader CHUCK SCHUMER, who has given and, throughout these 14 months, offered his wisdom and his trust, his friendship. I am deeply, deeply grateful.

Mr. President, what I know is that I stand on the floor of the Senate as a 14-month Senator, but my road to justice and the pursuit of justice has been much longer than 14 months. I know that I only stand here because of the men and women, the working families of SCIU and our labor movement, and I couldn't end this term without thanking them for sharing with me and inviting me into their stories of courage and hope for what is possible in our great country. I want them to know that I carry their stories with me and I carry their families with me, in my head and in my heart, here in the Senate and wherever it is that I go.

Mr. President, in my final few minutes, I want to end my time in the Senate the way that I began it. On this floor, I gave my first speech talking with and about America's ''now generation'': our young leaders, future Members of Congress, carpenters, plumbers, firefighters, nurses, police officers. I talked with them about what I had heard from them, from so many of them, about what was important. So in my last remarks, I want to come back to them, talk with and about them, offer a few lessons from this experience here with all of you.

All summer long, this ''now generation'' has been bopping to the masterful beats of California's own Kendrick Lamar. We all have been hearing from radio waves and all in our iPods the anthem that ''they not like us.'' As I celebrate what has become a global hit—I, too, have listened to it on repeat so often all throughout the summer—I want America's young leaders to know that the words of Kendrick are just that—words, lyrics in a historic rap battle, sources of great entertainment and joy. What they are not are words upon which we should build our communities or the future of our country because, indeed, ''they'' are exactly ''like us.''

You see, when I was 5, I went to Levi's Temple Head Start Center in Magnolia, MS. Of course, in Head Start, children get just that—a head start in learning the foundational lessons of preparing to be in a school environment. As I have been reflecting on this time and the lessons that this time has given me, I realized that in that old church building in Head Start, the experience there actually shaped who I have become. The seeds planted in Head Start are ones that have grown

in me every day for the 40 years since I left.

It was 1985, and my Head Start teacher was a woman by the name of Ms. Carrie Hilbert. I remember getting ready to graduate Head Start and trying on these royal-blue graduation gowns and graduation caps. For 2 weeks, Ms. Hilbert painstakingly prepared us for Head Start graduation. Our graduation song in 1985, she worked to make sure that we—little, squirmy 5- and 6-year-olds—were going to be able to sing this song and perform for our parents and our loved ones, and she did it masterfully.

Mr. President, in 1985, the lyrics Ms. Hilbert taught me were the lyrics to ''We Are the World,'' written by the great Lionel Richie, Michael Jackson, and Quincy Jones, whom we lost just earlier this year. I remember having to practice that song day after day for probably about 2 weeks, not knowing then that all throughout that graduation rehearsal, seeds were being planted—seeds sang by Stevie Wonder and Lionel Richie:

There comes a time when we must heed a certain call, when the world must come together as one.

Seeds. Seeds from Tina Turner and Billy Joel:

We're all a part of God's great big family, and the truth, you know love is all we need.

Seeds sang and planted by the unlikely duo of Willie Nelson and Al Jarreau, who planted the seeds that ''as God has shown us by turning stone to bread, and so we all must lend a helping hand.''

One of the most powerful seeds that really stuck with me were those offered by Michael Jackson, Huey Lewis, and Cyndi Lauper:

When you're down and out and there seems no hope at all, but if you just believe, there's no way we can fall. Let's realize . . . that a change can only come when we stand together as one.

Young leaders, colleagues, Mr. President, I believe it was those 2 weeks of repetition and practice that planted the seeds of possibility and hope, seeds of determination and courage. It was learning the lyrics to that song at 5 years old that inspired a generation full of patriots who believed in the power of this country to do good in the world and for each other, because when we choose to do hard things together—the people of this Nation, all of its elected leaders, our community advocates; when we see each other's humanity; when we see our neighbors as essential to the future we want for our children; when we understand that our differences are our greatest assets, it is then—then—when we truly are doing and being the best country in the world.

So my final prayer as a Member of this august body is that we realize that, as policymakers, we are generations' Head Start teachers. Every single day, we can plant seeds that will grow in the hearts and minds of young leaders, and we get to decide the seeds we plant. Will we plant seeds that help them understand and imagine what is possible for an America filled with people of different walks, different faiths, different bank accounts, different languages? Will we plant seeds to help them realize and see what is possible not just for the United States but for the world? And, as was taught to me in that old church building, we will reap what we sow.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

TRIBUTE TO LAPHONZA R. BUTLER

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I will wait for my colleague to receive her hugs of gratitude, and I have a few words I would like to say.

Mr. President, I wanted to just take a moment to add my thanks and congratulations to our colleague Senator LAPHONZA BUTLER.

You know, I look around this Chamber, and this is a Chamber that is filled with people who were once lawyers or Members of Congress, Governors or Lieutenant Governors—all incredibly fine and honorable professions—but there are not that many people in this room who came here because they were organizers. This is something that Senator BUTLER and I talked about when she first came to the Senate.

Now, organizers are different because we understand that the power of accomplishing important things comes certainly from our leadership and the work that we do, but fundamentally it comes from the people we work with every single day, the folks that are out there on the ground, living the lives and doing the work. If you understand that your power to do good work comes from those people, then you approach everything, every problem, from a different perspective.

I know this is where Senator BUTLER comes from as an organizer at SCIU and in her life, and I want to pay tribute to that because I think that kind of approach to problem-solving is something we can all learn from.

I have watched you in the short time you have been in the Senate—only 14 months, which, in the life of many Senators, is barely a blink of an eye—and I watched you figure out how to organize in this Chamber for the good of the people you represent.

I noticed, Senator BUTLER, as you were preparing to give your opening remarks, that Senator ROGER WICKER from Mississippi came up and gave you a big hug. This is our Senator who was born in Magnolia, MS. And I saw you start your building of a relationship with him on one of your very first days in the elevator when I was standing with you. That, I think, is a message and a lesson for all of us; that as you leave to go on to whatever you do next—and we can't wait to see what you do next—we should all keep in mind the power of those relationships and building power to actually make a difference—make a difference in this world.

The last thing I want to say, as we say farewell to you—only in this Chamber but not in our lives—is that your constant reminding us and using your platform to lift up the voices, as you say, of ''now leaders''—we have a tendency sometimes—those of us who are 50, 60, 70, 80—to talk about the next generation of leaders and that ''Your time will come, and we will need you.''

You always speak of our young leaders in the present tense because they are the leaders that we need now.

So as I think about your service here in the Senate and the work that you have done, those are the two lessons that I will carry forward in my work in this Chamber. I offer this with much gratitude for your leadership both here in this Chamber, the work that you have done before, and the work I know you will continue to do. Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONDEMNING THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN'S STATE-SPONSORED PERSECUTION OF THE BAHA'I MINORITY AND ITS CONTINUED VIOLATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration and the Senate proceed to S. Res. 74.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 74) condemning the Government of Iran's State-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, for more than 40 years, this body has been passing resolutions condemning the Iranian Government's persecution of the Baha'is.

This nightmare is not going away. In fact, the government of Iran has only intensified its ruthless agenda against the Baha'is.

Over the last 16 months, attacks against women and violent home raids have increased, hate speech has spread, and scores of Baha'is remain behind bars on arbitrary, trumped up charges.

Furthermore, Baha'is face ongoing employment and educational discrimination, as well as intrusive surveillance and invasive monitoring. The Baha'is are even denied the right to bury their dead, and when they do, their cemeteries are often vandalized or destroyed. Men, women, and children

bear the brunt of the Iranian Government's fear mongering day in and day out, with no end in sight.

It is crucial for the Senate to pass my resolution today and strongly condemn the repressive Iranian Government. The Iranian Government's long history of harassing, dehumanizing, and persecuting the Baha'i community in all forms is only getting longer and worse.

The Wyden family knows firsthand about authoritarian regimes targeting and persecuting individuals on the basis of religion. This issue is personal to me.

I have been promised for years that this resolution would receive consideration through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, but the committee hasn't taken up this important issue.

My resolution, which has strong bipartisan support, condemns the government of Iran's state-sanctioned persecution of the Baha'i community and its continued violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights.

My resolution further calls on the Iranian Government to release all people detained or imprisoned solely on account of their religion, end their campaign of hate against the Baha'is, and reverse policies that deny Baha'is and other religious minorities equal opportunities, freedoms, and rights under law.

My resolution also calls on the Biden administration to condemn these human rights violations, push for the release of religious prisoners, and use its authorities to impose sanctions against those responsible for these deplorable human rights abuses. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this crucial resolution to hold Iran's government accountable for its heinous repression of religious minorities.

Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Hearing no further debate, the question is on adoption of the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 74) was agreed to.

Mr. WYDEN. I ask unanimous consent that the Wyden substitute amendment at the desk to the preamble be agreed to; that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The amendment (No. 3312) to the preamble in the nature of a substitute was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the preamble)

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas, in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, and 2022, Congress declared that it deplored the religious persecution by the Government of Iran of the Baha'i community and would hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian nationals, including members of the Baha'i faith;

Whereas, since 1979, Iranian authorities have killed or executed more than 200 Baha'i leaders and more than 10,000 Baha'is have been dismissed from government and university jobs;

Whereas June 18, 2023, marked the 40th anniversary of the execution of 10 Baha'i women by the Government of Iran, each witnessing the hanging of those hanged before her in a final failed attempt to induce abandonment of their faith after over 6 months of imprisonment and violent abuse, with the youngest only 17 years old;

Whereas, on December 19, 2023, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/C.3/78/L.41) calling on Iran to carry out wide-ranging reforms and expressing serious concerns for its escalating human rights abuses, including—

(1) ''severe limitations and increasing restrictions on the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or belief'';

(2) ''restrictions on the establishment of places of worship, undue restrictions on burials carried out in accordance with religious tenets, attacks against places of worship and burial'';

(3) ''increased harassment, intimidation, persecution, arbitrary arrest, and detention of, and incitement to hatred that leads to violence against, persons belonging to recognized and unrecognized religious minorities, including Christians (particularly converts from Islam), Gonabadi Dervishes, Jews, Sufi Muslims, Sunni Muslims, Yarsanis, Zoroastrians, and in particular, Baha'is'';

(4) ''denial of and restrictions on access to education, including for members of the Baha'i faith''; and

(5) ''particular'' persecution of members of the Baha'i community ''who have been subjected to a continued increase in persecution, including attacks, harassment and targeting. . .on account of their faith and have been reportedly subjected to mass arrests and lengthy prison sentences, as well as the arrest of prominent members and increased confiscation and destruction of property'';

Whereas, in the 2024 Annual Report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom issued in May 2024, it is reported that in 2023—

(1) the Government of Iran ''conducted individual and mass arrests of Baha'is across Iran taking them to undisclosed locations and imposing excessively long prison sentences'';

(2) ''security officials beat and brutalized Baha'is during raids and searches of private homes'';

(3) ''security forces arrested scores of Baha'is in cities including Hamadan, Mehrshahr, Yazd, Karaj, Alborz, and Tehran'';

(4) the ''government has targeted Baha'i women in particular'' and that ''[a]pproximately two-thirds of Iranian Baha'i prisoners are women'';

(5) authorities ''targeted Baha'i cemeteries in Arak, Alborz, and Golestan''; and

(6) local ''municipalities seized and confiscated Baha'i land, restricted Baha'i access to burial grounds, and declared intentions to sell Baha'i-owned property exclusively to Muslims.'';

Whereas the Iran section of the Department of State's 2022 Report on International Religious Freedom issued in May 2023 provides, in part—

(1) ''[I]n July and August, security forces in cities across the country conducted multiple raids of Baha'i homes, confiscated property deemed 'illegitimate wealth', and arrested Baha'is in their homes or workplaces on unsubstantiated charges including 'causing intellectual and ideological insecurity in Muslim society.' '';

(2) ''Authorities reportedly continued to deny members of unrecognized religious minority groups access to education and government employment unless they declared themselves as belonging to one of the country's recognized religions on their application forms. UN experts reported universities rejected more than 90 Baha'i students between January and August.''; and

(3) ''Government officials and government-affiliated organizations continued to disseminate anti-Baha'i and antisemitic messages using traditional and social media.'';

Whereas, in response to a surge in persecution in June and July 2022, involving the subjection of over 100 Baha'is to arrests, arraignments, sentencing, and raids on their homes and businesses across Iran, including the sentencing in June of 26 individuals in the city of Shiraz to a combined total of 85 years in prison, the Department of State's Office of International Religious Freedom issued a statement on August 2, 2022, indicating that ''[a]mid a continued rise in arrests, sentences, and imprisonments, the U.S. urges Iran to halt its ongoing oppression of the Baha'i community and honor its international obligations to respect the right of all Iranians to freedom of religion or belief'';

Whereas, on November 21, 2022, Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi, 2 former members of the informal 7-person leadership group of the Baha'is of Iran, who each served 10-year sentences from 2008 to 2018, and have been detained since July 31, 2022, in Evin prison, were sentenced to 10 years in prison each after a summary trial lasting 1 hour;

Whereas, on December 11, 2022, the Baha'i International Community organization stated that ''Dr. Shirin Ebadi, the Nobel laureate and defence lawyer for Mahvash and Fariba during their first trial, said in 2008 that 'not a shred of evidence' was offered to prove the national security charges or other allegations. Nor was any new evidence forthcoming at this latest trial'';

Whereas, on January 12, 2024, the Baha'i International Community organization reported increasing incidents of persecution accompanied by intensified violence perpetrated against the Baha'i community by the Government of Iran, for example—

(1) ''since the beginning of October [2023] more than 200 incidents of persecution, including over 50 arrests and imprisonments, have occurred in various cities such as Shiraz, Yazd, Isfahan, Hamadan, and Karaj'';

(2) government agents have perpetrated ''increasingly violent home raids, disproportionately affecting women and the elderly, and have even resulted in hospitalizations and traumatic separations of mothers from their children. Notably, over two-thirds of those arrested and detained have been women, predominantly in their twenties and thirties, highlighting the escalation of attacks against women in recent months.''; and

(3) government agents have instigated a ''conspicuous rise in hate speech, where Baha'is have been accused of being behind the September 2022 protests, promoting permissiveness, being against Islam and Shiism, being spies for Israel and the West, and being part of a political movement that seeks to undermine the state'';

Whereas Iran is a member of the United Nations and a signatory to both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, among other international human rights treaties, without reservation;

Whereas section 105 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8514) authorizes the President to impose sanctions on individuals who are ''responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against citizens of

Iran or their family members on or after June 12, 2009''; and

Whereas the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–158) amends and expands the authorities established under the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–195) to sanction Iranian human rights abusers: Now, therefore, be it

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 74

Whereas, in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, and 2022, Congress declared that it deplored the religious persecution by the Government of Iran of the Baha'i community and would hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian nationals, including members of the Baha'i faith;

Whereas, since 1979, Iranian authorities have killed or executed more than 200 Baha'i leaders and more than 10,000 Baha'is have been dismissed from government and university jobs;

Whereas June 18, 2023, marked the 40th anniversary of the execution of 10 Baha'i women by the Government of Iran, each witnessing the hanging of those hanged before her in a final failed attempt to induce abandonment of their faith after over 6 months of imprisonment and violent abuse, with the youngest only 17 years old;

Whereas, on December 19, 2023, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/C.3/78/L.41) calling on Iran to carry out wide-ranging reforms and expressing serious concerns for its escalating human rights abuses, including—

(1) ''severe limitations and increasing restrictions on the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or belief'';

(2) ''restrictions on the establishment of places of worship, undue restrictions on burials carried out in accordance with religious tenets, attacks against places of worship and burial'';

(3) ''increased harassment, intimidation, persecution, arbitrary arrest, and detention of, and incitement to hatred that leads to violence against, persons belonging to recognized and unrecognized religious minorities, including Christians (particularly converts from Islam), Gonabadi Dervishes, Jews, Sufi Muslims, Sunni Muslims, Yarsanis, Zoroastrians, and in particular, Baha'is'';

(4) ''denial of and restrictions on access to education, including for members of the Baha'i faith''; and

(5) ''particular'' persecution of members of the Baha'i community ''who have been subjected to a continued increase in persecution, including attacks, harassment and targeting . . . on account of their faith and have been reportedly subjected to mass arrests and lengthy prison sentences, as well as the arrest of prominent members and increased confiscation and destruction of property'';

Whereas, in the 2024 Annual Report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom issued in May 2024, it is reported that in 2023—

(1) the Government of Iran ''conducted individual and mass arrests of Baha'is across Iran taking them to undisclosed locations and imposing excessively long prison sentences'';

(2) ''security officials beat and brutalized Baha'is during raids and searches of private homes'';

(3) ''security forces arrested scores of Baha'is in cities including Hamadan, Mehrshahr, Yazd, Karaj, Alborz, and Tehran'';

(4) the ''government has targeted Baha'i women in particular'' and that ''[a]pproximately two-thirds of Iranian Baha'i prisoners are women'';

(5) authorities ''targeted Baha'i cemeteries in Arak, Alborz, and Golestan''; and

(6) local ''municipalities seized and confiscated Baha'i land, restricted Baha'i access to burial grounds, and declared intentions to sell Baha'i-owned property exclusively to Muslims.'';

Whereas the Iran section of the Department of State's 2022 Report on International Religious Freedom issued in May 2023 provides, in part—

(1) ''[I]n July and August, security forces in cities across the country conducted multiple raids of Baha'i homes, confiscated property deemed 'illegitimate wealth', and arrested Baha'is in their homes or workplaces on unsubstantiated charges including 'causing intellectual and ideological insecurity in Muslim society.' '';

(2) ''Authorities reportedly continued to deny members of unrecognized religious minority groups access to education and government employment unless they declared themselves as belonging to one of the country's recognized religions on their application forms. UN experts reported universities rejected more than 90 Baha'i students between January and August.''; and

(3) ''Government officials and government-affiliated organizations continued to disseminate anti-Baha'i and antisemitic messages using traditional and social media.'';

Whereas, in response to a surge in persecution in June and July 2022, involving the subjection of over 100 Baha'is to arrests, arraignments, sentencing, and raids on their homes and businesses across Iran, including the sentencing in June of 26 individuals in the city of Shiraz to a combined total of 85 years in prison, the Department of State's Office of International Religious Freedom issued a statement on August 2, 2022, indicating that ''[a]mid a continued rise in arrests, sentences, and imprisonments, the U.S. urges Iran to halt its ongoing oppression of the Baha'i community and honor its international obligations to respect the right of all Iranians to freedom of religion or belief'';

Whereas, on November 21, 2022, Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi, 2 former members of the informal 7-person leadership group of the Baha'is of Iran, who each served 10-year sentences from 2008 to 2018, and have been detained since July 31, 2022, in Evin prison, were sentenced to 10 years in prison each after a summary trial lasting 1 hour;

Whereas, on December 11, 2022, the Baha'i International Community organization stated that ''Dr. Shirin Ebadi, the Nobel laureate and defence lawyer for Mahvash and Fariba during their first trial, said in 2008 that 'not a shred of evidence' was offered to prove the national security charges or other allegations. Nor was any new evidence forthcoming at this latest trial'';

Whereas, on January 12, 2024, the Baha'i International Community organization reported increasing incidents of persecution accompanied by intensified violence perpetrated against the Baha'i community by the Government of Iran, for example—

(1) ''since the beginning of October [2023] more than 200 incidents of persecution, including over 50 arrests and imprisonments, have occurred in various cities such as Shiraz, Yazd, Isfahan, Hamadan, and Karaj'';

(2) government agents have perpetrated ''increasingly violent home raids, disproportionately affecting women and the elderly, and have even resulted in hospitalizations and traumatic separations of mothers from their children. Notably, over two-thirds of those arrested and detained have been women, predominantly in their twenties and thirties, highlighting the escalation of attacks against women in recent months.''; and

(3) government agents have instigated a ''conspicuous rise in hate speech, where Baha'is have been accused of being behind the September 2022 protests, promoting permissiveness, being against Islam and Shiism, being spies for Israel and the West, and being part of a political movement that seeks to undermine the state'';

Whereas Iran is a member of the United Nations and a signatory to both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, among other international human rights treaties, without reservation;

Whereas section 105 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8514) authorizes the President to impose sanctions on individuals who are ''responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against citizens of Iran or their family members on or after June 12, 2009''; and

Whereas the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–158) amends and expands the authorities established under the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–195) to sanction Iranian human rights abusers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority in Iran and the continued violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

(2) calls on the Government of Iran—

(A) to immediately release the imprisoned or detained Baha'is and all other prisoners held solely on account of their religion;

(B) to end its state-sponsored campaign of hate propaganda against the Baha'is; and

(C) to reverse state-imposed policies denying Baha'is and members of other religious minorities equal opportunities to higher education, earning a livelihood, due process under the law, and the free exercise of religious practices;

(3) calls on the President and the Secretary of State, in cooperation with responsible nations, to immediately condemn the Government of Iran's continued violation of human rights, and demand the immediate release of prisoners held solely on account of their religion; and

(4) urges the President and the Secretary of State to utilize available authorities to impose sanctions on officials of the Government of Iran and other individuals directly responsible for serious human rights abuses, including abuses against the Baha'i community of Iran.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 846, Keli Marie Neary, of Pennsylvania, to be United

States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tammy Duckworth, Ben Ray Luján, Patty Murray, Alex Padilla, Peter Welch, Jeff Merkley, Richard Blumenthal, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher A. Coons, Debbie Stabenow, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Elizabeth Warren, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jack Reed, Tim Kaine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Keli Marie Neary, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 48, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 316 Ex.]

YEAS—48

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Helmy	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Brown	Hirono	Schatz
Butler	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Kelly	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Smith
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Luján	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Markey	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Fetterman	Murray	Welch
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden

NAYS—45

Barrasso	Fischer	Murkowski
Blackburn	Graham	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Ricketts
Braun	Hagerty	Risch
Britt	Hawley	Romney
Budd	Hoeven	Rounds
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Mullin	Young

NOT VOTING—7

Booker	Padilla	Vance
Cornyn	Rubio	
Moran	Sinema	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 48, the nays are 45.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BUTLER). The nomination is pending.

The Senator from Mississippi.

TRIBUTE TO MICHELLE BARLOW RICHARDSON

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, it is fitting that a daughter of Mississippi is presiding at this poignant moment for me and for my entire staff.

I come to the floor today with a forced smile and a bittersweet message, a bit of official news I have not been eager to report, and that news is that Michelle Barlow Richardson, who sits at my side at this very moment and who has stood by my side for a quarter century, my chief of staff, will soon depart Capitol Hill. This closes a 25-year chapter of service to my office, to the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, to the State of Mississippi, and to the citizens of the United States.

Anyone who knows Michelle has found out very quickly that Michelle is a Mississippi State Bulldog. She graduated from Mississippi State University in 1997 and then moved up east to Washington, DC, to begin work at my office. And she got right to work, beginning where many staffers do, as a legislative correspondent and then as an executive assistant. She set my schedule. She began to guide proposals into law, which is what we do here. Michelle would go on to higher rungs up the ladder, but she never lost her appreciation for every role on the team. And many members of the team join us in this Chamber at this moment. To this day, no task is too small for Michelle. She has not hesitated to climb into the trenches again and again.

Michelle is fiercely loyal. Her relationship to Mississippi State University is a prime example of this trait. When the MSU community sings their school's anthem at an event, they all sing, ''Loyal friends we'll always be.'' Quite fitting. We even lost Michelle to Starkville briefly in 1999. At that point—only a couple of years out of college—she was given the very important job of fundraising for a project that ended up generating over $4 million to endow a scholarship. That fund is helping students in Mississippi to this very day.

But luckily, in 2001, we got her back. As I reflect on the 23 years that have passed since then, I am filled with gratitude for Michelle. And I am beaming with pride over all the good work she has accomplished.

In Washington, DC—as you so poignantly know, Madam President—change is constant: a different Congress every 2 years, new leadership opportunities, Senators come and go, changing committee assignments. During these transitions, Michelle has been a steadfast presence, guiding my staff and me through numerous changes over the years.

A big change came in 2007, not long after Michelle had been promoted to be my chief of staff. Our office picked up and moved to this end of the Capitol when I was selected to fill the seat vacated by U.S. Senator Trent Lott. The success of that transition is due, in no small part, to Michelle's deep institutional knowledge, broad networks, and natural leadership skills.

The next year, to the extent permitted by the law and the rules, she helped lead my first statewide election campaign. She expanded a campaign and fundraising organization that she had developed in the First Congressional District, and she applied it to all of our great State of Mississippi.

Of course, when you get elected, you have to govern. And over here on the Senate side, Michelle once again rose to the challenge of a larger role in governing. She scaled up the size of ''Team Wicker'' from 18 people to 45 teammates across 5 offices.

Over the years, she also established a network of Senate chiefs of staff. In fact, it is known throughout Capitol Hill that Michelle Barlow Richardson has become the ''dean'' of the Senate chiefs of staff. That is what we are losing tomorrow when she moves to another capacity. Michelle has built a community where collaboration, information, and mutual support can flow.

Then, in 2016, we had another transition. I was elected to chair of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, and, as usual, Michelle was right there to help. Under her leadership, the office adjusted to new responsibilities and certainly new schedules.

A few years after that, I took up the gavel on the Senate Commerce Committee. Michelle helped build a team of policy experts who would craft smart legislation on the vast portfolio of the Commerce Committee—everything from the seabed to the stars.

President Ronald Reagan once said that ''personnel is policy.'' Well, Michelle and the personnel she has cultivated have gone on to produce substantive and savvy policy. She has been pivotal to work that has brought billions of dollars in new jobs and new investments to Mississippi. Through years of legislative efforts, Michelle has been making connections, educating stakeholders, and holding our strong legislative principles—and holding our feet to the fire. Through every negotiation and late night, she has been motivating our staff.

In scaling up the staff from the House team to the much larger Senate team, over the years, Michelle has led literally hundreds of able staff members.

Her leadership left an incredible legacy. Michelle was good at identifying talent. She has challenged staffers to accomplish goals they did not know they were capable of reaching. She has embraced the burden of making tough decisions. She has delivered tough but constructive feedback directly and concisely, without ever making it personal. And a massive cloud of witnesses can testify to her influence. Many former Wicker staffers are now serving in leadership roles around the country. I am the one privileged to give this floor speech, but I know many could give speeches—and perhaps will give speeches—of their own, telling the stories of Michelle's influence in their lives.

Those who know Michelle Barlow Richardson know her for her strong devotion and friendship. That is especially true for my wife Gayle and me. Michelle's title has been chief of staff, but she has been so much more. She has been by our side in public service and in private moments and moments of joy and moments of pain.

Words are inadequate, and these remarks, in particular, are inadequate. We will miss Michelle's enthusiasm for all things Mississippi. We will miss the presence she—and occasionally her children—have brought to the office. We will even miss the Mississippi State University maroon and cowbell. But loyal friends we will certainly always be. We will remain grateful for her friendship, and we wish her, this public servant and American patriot, the very best.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

NOMINATIONS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, if there is one thing we have learned from last month's election, it is that President Trump has a clear mandate from the American people to get this country back on track, and one of the things that Tennesseans talk to me most about is the need to restore law and order all across this country.

I am so encouraged by President Trump's nominees who are going to take the lead in reforming our Federal law enforcement Agencies, and, today, I want to touch on two of those who are reforming law enforcement Agencies.

I will tell the Presiding Officer, next week, I am going to come and talk about the nominees for our military and national security. I want to talk about the qualifications of Pete Hegseth, who is going to be a great Secretary of Defense; but, today, we are going to talk about Kash Patel at the FBI and Pam Bondi at the Justice Department.

Now, these two Agencies—I think everybody agrees—are in desperate need of a course correction. Under the Biden-Harris administration, they have repeatedly undermined the rule of law with a two-tiered justice system. Its rules are simple: If you break the law and you are a Democrat, then you are off the hook—that is the way they have operated—but if you are a conservative or you dissent from the left's radical agenda, the government will end up targeting you for your beliefs.

What we know is that, under Mr. Patel and Ms. Bondi, this abuse of power will come to an end, and few people are better qualified to get this job done and enforce the rule of law than Ms. Bondi and Mr. Patel.

As a former prosecutor for the Justice Department—and, by the way, he worked under Democrats and Republicans—Mr. Patel led the successful prosecutions of criminals that were tied to terrorist organizations like al-Qaida and ISIS.

On the House Intel Committee, he worked with Congressman DEVIN NUNES, the chair of that committee, to expose the FBI and the Justice Department's abuses during Russiagate, or the Russia hoax, as it became known.

In the first Trump administration, he served as the Deputy Director of National Intelligence. He served at the Security Council and the Defense Department as Chief of Staff.

This is a varied background. It is a credible background for the job in front of him of restoring law and order in our cities across this country, in countering terror threats, and in ending human trafficking, and that is the job of the FBI.

I will say this on the human trafficking: I am especially encouraged by his support for releasing the Jeffrey Epstein flight logs and black book. We know the abuse spanned decades from Mr. Epstein, and it harmed many vulnerable young girls, and we know a large network of high-profile, high-dollar predators participated in this horrific abuse on a global level. So, by releasing the flight logs, we can start to break apart the sex trafficking rings and ensure that the predators are put in jail where they belong. This effort will go a long way in restoring public confidence in the FBI and in ending the left's two-tiered justice system. On this front, he will work closely with Pam Bondi, who is President Trump's excellent choice for Attorney General.

Earlier this week, I had my official meeting with Ms. Bondi, whom I have known and worked with for over the past decade. Our meeting only reaffirmed my conviction that she will be fearless in rooting out corruption, taking on the deep state, and restoring the Justice Department to its core mission: enforcing equal justice under the law.

To be certain, her accomplishments speak for themselves. With more than 18 years of experience as a prosecutor, she became the first woman to serve as the attorney general of Florida in 2011. While there, she worked to protect the most vulnerable among us by taking on drug dealers and human traffickers.

During the first Trump administration, she also worked to end our Nation's drug epidemic as a member of the Opioid and Drug Abuse Commission. This experience will be invaluable to her as she leads this top law enforcement Agency.

Kash Patel and Pam Bondi are just two of Trump's incredible picks, but they are representative of the talent, experience, and determination shown by his Cabinet selections and nominees. As we head into the new year, I will look forward to supporting them and ensuring that they can get to work as soon as possible for the American people.

KIDS ONLINE SAFETY ACT

Madam President, although we have a busy end of year ahead of us, there is at least one thing Congress must do before the end of the year, and that is to pass the very bipartisan Kids Online Safety Act.

Back in July, this Chamber passed KOSA by an overwhelming bipartisan majority. The vote was 91 to 3. The reason is very simple: Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle recognize that Big Tech must be held accountable for putting our children's safety at risk. They have put profit ahead of our children's safety, and they want to continue to do that.

KOSA puts the priority on safety by providing parents and kids with tools, safeguards, and the transparency that they need to protect against online harms. Among its provisions, the legislation would create a duty of care for online platforms to prevent and mitigate specific dangers to minors, including the promotion of suicide, eating disorders, substance abuse, and sexual exploitation.

Since KOSA's passage in the Senate, more and more evidence has emerged showing that this legislation is desperately needed. In October, for example, reports emerged showing that Chinese-owned TikTok purposefully developed algorithms to keep children scrolling as long as they could. Of course, the more time a child spends on the platform the more data TikTok can collect, then the more valuable that platform becomes.

While this happens, TikTok executives privately acknowledge that such addiction does lead to mental health issues, including a loss of memory and cognition. But do you know what? They don't care. When your child is online, they are the profit. They are a profit center for these platforms.

Now, other platforms, from Facebook to Instagram, have also developed addictive algorithms that expose children to unthinkable harms, including sexual abuse and lethal drugs. But, again, these platforms don't care. They do not give a ripping flip about your child.

This tragedy has got to come to an end, but for months, KOSA has been held up in the House because of blatant falsehoods that are being pushed by Big Tech lobbyists. We know who they are, and we know what they are saying. Let me just read some of these falsehoods to you.

They say that KOSA would censor free speech, and it will not. KOSA is a product design bill. It is not a contact bill.

There are some out there who say: Well, it is going to give all of this authority to the FTC. It does not. It does not increase the authority of the FTC. It is important to note that there is no new rulemaking power for the FTC in KOSA or any ability to create rules about content. So they are lying. The lobbyists and some of these House staffers who are listening to these lobbyists are spreading falsehoods. It should come to a stop. Our children deserve better.

We know that what KOSA will do is put in place tools for parents, and, of course, Big Tech is out here spreading

lies and having their lobbyists spread lies because they want to evade accountability on this. I have even heard this: I have heard of staffers in the House and lobbyists bragging that they have been able to kill KOSA, that they are going to keep this profit center going, that they have been able to kill this bill. It is absolutely disgusting that they would agree with Big Tech and put that number—that dollar figure—on our kids' heads.

Do you know, when we were doing the hearings on this, what did we hear from kid after kid who came in? They came in wearing a T-shirt, ''270,'' saying: I am worth more than $270. That is the value that some of these platforms have assigned to the amount of time a child spends on their platform. That is the profit they make.

You know, if you listen to some of these staffers and some of these lobbyists, you would think, my goodness, if we don't need to have some kind of protections in the virtual space, why do we have laws in the physical space to protect kids? Minors can't enter into a contract. Minors can't go buy alcohol and tobacco. If you have got a store that sells liquor and you sell to a kid, they will come, put the chains on your store, and close you down. It is the same thing with alcohol and the same thing with pornography.

The Presiding Officer and I are parents. I am a grandparent. We see what is happening to these precious children, and they are being subjected to drugs, to alcohol; they are being subjected to pornography; they are being subjected to sexual exploitation, and it is done 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year, and yet Big Tech—they don't care. They do not care about protecting your children. So the only thing we are left to surmise is, if they don't protect them in the virtual space, they are, for sure, not going to support protecting them in the physical space. I would surmise that people who are against KOSA would do away with all of these laws that protect children.

Society has decided our precious children are worth the fight, that they are worth the protection. And it is disgusting—disgusting—when you hear these Big Tech platforms say there is a value to keeping that child scrolling, that there is a value to holding their eyes online—and when you hear it repeated by people in our Chambers—staffers—it is sickening.

This is not a political game. Protecting our children is something that we in the Senate have agreed to do on a bipartisan basis. This bill has been stuck in the House since July. We know why it has been stuck, and we know that falsehoods are being spread. This is a bill that deserves a vote on the House floor because what we do know is this: By an overwhelming bipartisan majority, Members of the U.S. House of Representatives support this bill. It is time for those who are standing in the way of passing this bill to put aside—to put aside—their objections and to allow protections for our children to take place in the virtual space.

Since 1998, there has not been any additional protection placed in the virtual space. Why is that? It is because Big Tech sees our kids as a product. They make a lot of money—a whole lot of money—when those kids are scrolling. It is killing our kids. Just as in the physical world we put in place laws to protect them, they deserve the same protections in that virtual space.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELMY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY ACT

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, for over a year, I have worked to get rid of a rule that is driving every one of my small businesses in Oklahoma absolutely crazy. A lot of Americans have no idea what the beneficial ownership rule is, but if you own a small business in America, you definitely know.

To set the context for this, next week, we are supposed to take up the national defense authorization. In 2021, a small, little section was stuck in at the end in the large national defense authorization that was called the corporate transparency beneficial ownership act. That little bill was supposed to root out money laundering and fraud. What it has become has been a nightmare for every business owner in my State.

If you are a business owner that has a business that is a small business—let's say less than 20 employees, less than $5 million in total revenue in a year—you now have to fill out this enormous set of forms and turn them in to the Federal Government to show your ownership structure to the Federal Government so they can track it.

I will tell you, there are quite a few business owners that don't own one business; they may own two or three businesses or they may own several LLCs if they are a builder or they are a property developer, if they do all kinds of property construction for small businesses and building for others. They will own several LLCs, and now they have a stack of forms they have to fill out. They have to fill out forms now that talk about their name, their birth date, their address, an ID number, and all of it. They want to know all the reporting for their legal address, their address, the jurisdiction of their information. They want to know all the senior officers of the reporting company. They want to know someone who has the authority over the appointment or the removal of those senior officers. This is my favorite: They want to know substantial influencers over the decisions in the company. No one even knows what that means. Who is your substantial influence in your small business?

All those things all have to be compiled by business owners that literally do their own books, that do their own purchasing, that do their own payroll. They have plenty of other things to do other than the requirement to fill out forms.

Now, it wouldn't be such a big deal if it was just a form that dropped into their box, but it is a form dropped into their box, and it had this little note attached to it: If you don't fill this out or you fill it out wrong, it is a $10,000 fine and up to 2 years in prison for not filling this form out—2 years in prison for not filling out this form outlining who influences you in your decisions in your small business.

When this was stuck into the national defense authorization in 2021, it was supposed to root out fraud and waste, but it has grown through regulations and is now poured out with a deadline that is literally a couple of weeks away.

I have fought for a year. Senator TUBERVILLE has a bill to be able to end this entirely. We got no traction on that. We couldn't even get a vote in this Senate to be able to stop this nightmare. So I brought a second bill to say let's just delay it so it is not happening this year, and we have worked for months to be able to get that delay in, and we have not been able to get a vote on that in this Senate.

While small businesses all over my State are furious about this, we have tried to just say: Somebody needs to show some common sense and to stop asking these questions. Thankfully, in the last 72 hours, a Federal judge has stepped in and has halted this nationwide, has prevented the Biden administration from actually implementing this rule that they created. In fact, this judge called this regulation quasi-Orwellian, also determined this—saying the ''government is unable to provide the court with any tenable theory that [this regulation] falls within Congress's power. [It] appears likely unconstitutional.'' I absolutely agree.

I am grateful this judge has stepped in to be able to stop its implementation, but I am going to still ask this Senate to do the same thing we have asked all year; that is, to stop it entirely.

We should not be asking these questions of every small business in America. That is not our job, to ask every small business owner in America: Turn in who are the influencers on your decisionmaking or we will put you in prison for 2 years.

What in the world?

So I am grateful for the stop, but we also will not stop until we actually pull this entire thing out and say this is not our job. We have plenty of things that are our job that we are not doing. For

instance, next week—the national defense authorization, passed on a bipartisan basis through committee months ago, has yet to come to the Senate floor. It is time for it to be able to come, long past overdue. This sets our military strategy and what we are going to do for our vets and for the members of Active-Duty Reserves and National Guard. This should have been done a long time ago.

Those are the things we should already be doing. Going to business owners and telling them ''Tell us who your influencers are'' are things we should not be doing.

DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Mr. President, I left a meeting just now dealing with the newly named Department of Government Efficiency, where Members of the House and Senate gathered around Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswarmy and asked questions of each other: What can we do to make government more efficient?

This shouldn't be a partisan organization. In fact, there are Democrats that have joined us in this conversation. I find no one in my great State of Oklahoma who says: You know what I really want from my government? I want them to be inefficient. I want them to waste my money. I want my government to spend money on things that really don't matter for the country.

Every person that I meet in my State—Republican, Democrat, or Independent—all say the same thing: The government should do its job and not somebody else's job. When you spend my money, spend it wisely.

We all know we need roads. We all know we need national defense. We all know we need border security. There are key things we all need to do. But there are some things that continue to be able to pop up where money is being spent that there is great frustration in my State and a great number of people that say: Why are we spending money on that?

We spent money 2 years ago, as a Federal tax dollar, and the people in my State of Oklahoma had to spend their hard-earned tax money on paying for drag shows in Ecuador. We have money that was spent on writing the book about humans, chimpanzees, and climate change in Sierra Leone. We spent some of our hard-earned tax dollars on doing a study about seatbelts and helmet usage in Ghana.

The folks in Oklahoma asked a very simple question. We want the pot holes fixed. We want efficient government. We want education taken care of. We want good schools. Why are we spending our dollars—that are limited dollars—on doing a helmet study in Ghana? Why aren't we doing that in the United States? Why aren't we taking care of us?

It is not that we are selfish; it is just that we all know we are $36 trillion in debt. Every single year, I put out a book called ''Federal Fumbles.'' Every year, I bring it to this body. Every year, we talk about inefficiency and waste in government.

I am grateful that there is a bipartisan conversation finally started that is spreading among this body and the House body and now the new incoming executive branch saying: Let's find areas of efficiency where we can be better at this.

The basic goal is this: Let's have a prosperous Nation that actually has economic growth and an efficient government that matches the efficiency of you our Nation. That shouldn't be an irrational goal. That should be something we could all agree on. Quite frankly, it is just Oklahomans saying: Don't waste my money. Spend it in the way you are supposed to spend it, and let me keep the dollars that I have earned. And when my tax dollars go away, don't make me be embarrassed how they are used.

That shouldn't be irrational. I am going to continue to press on this.

Five years ago, we passed a bill called the Taxpayers Right-to-Know Act. I worked with the Biden administration for the last several years. It has created something called the Federal Program Inventory. As crazy as it sounds, for the first time ever, we are actually building a list of all the Federal programs we have in the Federal Government. Many people don't know that we literally have so many programs that we don't know how many programs we have in the Federal Government. Just try to do an internet search and ask a simple question of AI: How many programs do we have in the Federal Government? It will give you an estimate because there is no master list of all the programs in the Federal Government.

So I passed a law called the Taxpayers Right-to-Know Act requiring Agencies to do something crazy: Make a list of all the programs that you do. Where is our money being spent? And that list is in the process of being built right now that will give us the ability to see where we have duplication in government. It will give the ability from one Agency to look at another Agency and say: I didn't realize we did the same thing.

That is happening all over our government right now.

Again, that is straightforward. But it gives us an opportunity to say: Make a list, prioritize the list, and then draw a line and say these things are not our priorities; these things are. And when you are $36 trillion in debt, we should be talking about doing our priorities and not doing the things that are not a priority. This is what we should do in this body and to be able to have this kind of conversation.

So, for me, it is simple. Let's do the things that we should do. Let's don't do the things we shouldn't do because there are plenty of things that still need to get done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FETTERMAN). The Senator from Massachusetts.

SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I am actually joined here today with my Massachusetts staff, who is joining with my Washington staff, and they are in the Gallery today. The subject I am about to talk to is very near and dear to their hearts. It is near the top of the list of all the issues they think go to fundamental unfairness in our society, because right now, an entire generation of teachers and firefighters and postal workers and police officers and public servants of all stripes are being denied the Social Security benefits which they earned.

In 1983, the so-called windfall elimination provision slashed retirement benefits in the name of austerity. I was a Member of the House of Representatives in the U.S. Congress in 1983. I voted against the windfall elimination provision. I voted against Republicans. I voted against many Democrats who all were willing to slash the benefits of those hard-working teachers, firefighters, police officers, across the board—and have lost it for four decades—because I knew that I was voting for public servants and voting for their families.

I have been fighting for repeal of the windfall elimination provision as well as the government pension offset ever since, and I stand here today because we have an opportunity to finally see this repeal through to conclusion.

Senator BROWN and Senator COLLINS' Social Security Fairness Act would repeal the windfall elimination provision and the government offset provision. I am proud to cosponsor that bill, alongside 60 of my colleagues from both parties, and 60 is the number you need to pass a bill on the floor of the U.S. Senate. We can restore Social Security benefits for millions of workers now, and we should do it now.

Three million—unbelievable—three million public servants and their families around the country, including 130,000 in Massachusetts and their families, are counting on us to get them their earned benefits. They have already done the work, but a 1983 law denies them that check in the mail.

No one else in the country was targeted in that bill—just those public servants, those people who work for each and every one of us every single day.

A retired public school teacher in Chicopee, MA, wrote to me and explained that she had dutifully paid into Social Security for decades, earning her right to Social Security and a secure retirement. But late in her career, she answered the call to public service and dedicated her time to educating students in Massachusetts. That is the kind of action we should value and we should reward. Instead, she was blindsided 10 years later to learn that because of her public service and the modest public pension she accrued, her Social Security benefits would be cut by $580 a month, which otherwise would be there on her kitchen table for

herself, for her family. Now, instead of a secure and dignified retirement, she has to worry about affording rent and medication and groceries.

If, instead of teaching, she had earned a private pension, she had worked in any other sector of the American economy or she was wealthy enough to live off of her investments, her Social Security would be safe. The only category is these people who were the public servants. They are the ones who got targeted in 1983.

Another constituent from Tyngsboro, MA, wrote me to say that after her father passed away, her mother, a retired school employee, lost over $1,000 a month in Social Security. Now, in addition to mourning her husband, she also struggles to pay bills and meet her basic needs.

There are 3 million more stories of injustice and indignity just like this.

We know the Federal Government can be in the business of allowing windfalls. Major corporations hiking up prices on the American people while paying effectively no Federal taxes—that is a windfall. Private equity cronies making millions off the backs of workers while laying them off and gutting their pensions—that is a windfall. But make no mistake, allowing a third grade teacher, a town firefighter, and a mailman to receive their hard-earned retirement benefits is not a windfall.

Repealing these draconian policies is a matter of justice and dignity for millions of public servants. These workers served their communities and delivered for us every single day. In every city and town across the country—Massachusetts, the President's home State of Pennsylvania—State after State, the story is the same, and now it is time for us to deliver for them.

After four decades of fighting and organizing alongside unions and workers and retirees, Congress must repeal these policies once and for all. The Senate may be short on time, but public servants have waited long enough.

In the time remaining this year, we must deliver for those 3 million families in our country. They earned this benefit. We have to finally meet the obligation which has been accrued by the American people to those 3 million workers.

So let's vote to pass the Social Security Fairness Act. Bring home this win for public servants, their families, and our communities.

No matter where you live in America, when you see that firefighter on the fire engine, when you see that police officer rushing to protect a family, when you call the teacher to ask ''How is my child doing?''—every time you make one of those calls, every time you see one of those people, just know that they are denied—they are denied the benefit which they have earned. They are denied it by an act of the U.S. Congress in 1983.

Why them? Why were they singled out? Why wasn't it billionaires? Why wasn't it private equity? Well, the votes were there, and, unfortunately, too many Democrats voted for it as well.

It is time for us to rectify that historic injustice. It is time for us to provide fundamental fairness for each and every one of those families. This is the time; this is the place; we are the people who must get this done. It goes right to the heart of who we are as a people. If you believe in government, then you must believe in everything that teachers and firefighters and police and everyone else who is in our cities and towns provide for us every single day. And we must have that vote on the Senate floor. We must pass this legislation. We must finally give back to these families what they have earned by their service to us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

SUDAN

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss the terrible ongoing humanitarian situation in Sudan, and the atrocities that are being perpetrated against innocent civilians there every day and to discuss measures that the United States and the U.S. Senate can take to help end the suffering.

Since that brutal conflict erupted in April 2023, a staggering 11.8 million people have been displaced within Sudan or fled to neighboring countries. More than half the population—over 25 million people—face acute food insecurity, including 13 million children. And 1.5 million of them are at risk of or facing famine.

While the total casualty numbers have been difficult to determine, a new study from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine's Sudan Research Group estimates that more than 60,000 people died in the Khartoum region alone between April 2023 and June of 2024. That study found that 26,000 people have died as a result of violence. But it also highlighted another awful reality, that starvation and disease are increasingly becoming the leading causes of death reported across Sudan.

In a hearing in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in May of this year, U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan Tom Perriello suggested that the total death toll could be as high as 150,000 people.

Given the scope and scale of this human suffering, the United States and the international community should be doing everything in our power to end the carnage and end the suffering in Sudan. Toward that end, I want to commend America's Special Envoy to Sudan Tom Perriello for his tireless shuttle diplomacy and his ongoing efforts to seek and negotiate an agreement to end the conflict that is fueling this crisis. But he can't do it alone. And his job is made much more difficult when other parts of the U.S. Government fail to effectively use our leverage to support his efforts.

One thing we should not be doing is shipping advanced American weapons to any country that is fueling the misery and suffering and killing in Sudan, and yet that is what the Biden administration is proposing to do. They are proposing to send weapons to the United Arab Emirates at a time that the UAE is reportedly supplying weapons to a vile and murderous militia group in Sudan, a group called the Rapid Support Forces, or the RSF for short.

So I am here on the floor today urging my colleagues to prevent the sale of American weapons to the UAE until and unless the Biden administration provides us—the Senate, the Congress—with credible assurances that the UAE will not, in turn, supply additional weapons to the Rapid Support Forces in Sudan.

So let me step back for a moment to put all of this in context. About 3½ years ago in May of 2021, I traveled to Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, with my colleague Senator COONS. At the time, Sudan was experiencing a difficult transition to democracy after a popular revolution in 2019 succeeded in ousting the brutal regime of the dictator Omar Bashir. It wasn't easy, but there was hope for a brighter future.

Then the Sudanese Armed Forces—or the SAF—and the Rapid Support Forces—the RSF—who had backed the popular protests in 2019 and who had helped oust the dictator Bashir usurped the newly formed civilian-led government in 2021 and then proceeded to violently suppress mass protests.

Following pressure, both from the people of Sudan but also from the international community, to restore the civilian government and merge their forces, instead, a long-simmering rivalry between the SAF and the RSF erupted in April 2023, and Sudan descended into chaos and civil war.

Now, there is plenty of blame to go around, but one of the many drivers of the collapse of the fragile democracy was the refusal of the Rapid Support Forces, that militia group, to come under the umbrella of the Sudanese Armed Forces.

And the RSF has an especially sinister lineage. They have their roots in the Janjaweed militias that former dictator Bashir used to brutally crush rebellious tribes in the western Darfur region in the early 2000s. I think many who followed those terrible days remember that the United States determined that those mass killings constituted genocide.

The current leader of the RSF goes by the name Hemedti. He is a former Janjaweed militia leader who was complicit in those atrocities in Darfur, and he hasn't changed.

In the current conflict, the United States has charged the RSF with committing ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Reputable human rights organizations and news outlets have also reported widespread acts of sexual violence, including rape, by the RSF.

As our Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield noted in March of this year:

Children are starving . . . wasting, [and] dying. Far from their homes and their communities, millions of refugees are praying in over-crowded camps.

People in Darfur . . . wake up not to the call of prayer, but to the sound of gunfire, of shelling, of cries for help.

And the situation has not improved since then. Famine has taken hold in Darfur, and the RSF's siege of Al-Fashir city in Darfur has only exacerbated the already terrible humanitarian situation there.

So it should be clear that providing weapons to the RSF is tantamount to aiding and abetting ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, and yet that is what the UAE is reportedly doing.

Now, I should make it very clear that the UAE denies that it is arming the RSF. They say they are not doing it. Indeed, when I traveled to the UAE in July of this year, Emirati officials told me they were not sending weapons to the RSF. And yet numerous credible reports and sources indicate just the opposite. They reveal that the UAE is, in fact, supplying the murderous RSF militia with weapons that they use to commit atrocities.

In January, a U.N. panel of experts documented what they described as ''credible'' allegations that the UAE was violating the Darfur arms embargo, which was the embargo put in place in 2005 to stop the genocide at that time.

Their findings have been corroborated by credible human rights organizations and by an independent investigation by the New York Times, which found that the UAE smuggled weapons to the RSF under the guise of humanitarian aid. The front page story of the New York Times—and I have it here, Mr. President—is entitled ''How a U.S. Ally Uses Aid as a Cover in War.''

And they go on to point out that the UAE is expanding a covert campaign to back a winner in Sudan's civil war, and they point out that the UAE was smuggling in weapons and deploying drones.

Beyond the New York Times independent investigation, the Sudan Conflict Observatory group—which is a group funded by the State Department—also tracked 32 Emirati flights between June 2023 and May 2024 going into Sudan, and they concluded—again, this is a group funded by the U.S. Department of State. They concluded with ''near certainty'' that they constituted weapons transfers from the UAE to the RSF.

Now, the Biden administration has also acknowledged that the UAE has been supporting the RSF, although you have to read carefully between the lines to determine that.

Again, our Ambassador to the United Nations, Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield, said:

We are aware that both sides are receiving weapons and other support to fuel their efforts to destroy Sudan, and yes, we have engaged with the parties on that, including with our colleagues from the UAE.''

So the question is this: If the Biden administration acknowledges that the UAE is arming the RSF against our demands and our interests and that they are lying about it, why are we, the United States, not doing more to stop it?

I understand that we have a very important bilateral relationship with the UAE. They are an important security partner in the Middle East. Major American companies, like Microsoft, are talking about collaborating on building data centers for advanced AI in the UAE with companies like G42. They may also be cooperating with us on other important American priorities. But that is not a good reason to approve this sale of advanced weapons to the UAE at a time that the UAE is reportedly aiding and abetting ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity in Sudan.

That is why I have filed what is known as a joint resolution of disapproval—known by its shorthand, JRD—on the Biden administration's request to sell offensive weapons, including weapons worth $1.2 billion to the United Arab Emirates. In the House of Representatives, Congresswoman SARA JACOBS has filed a similar resolution, and both of us have introduced additional legislation on this issue.

And I would submit that, if any Senator is serious about ending the suffering in Sudan, we should not be sending weapons to any country—in this case, the UAE—that is arming those engaged in ethnic cleansing there.

A lot of Senators have talked about the need to focus on ending the humanitarian disaster in Sudan, and they are absolutely right to do so. Many of us have been addressing this and talking about it for a very long time. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee had an important hearing on this matter in May of this year.

But, colleagues, you don't end the horrific suffering in Sudan by sending weapons to a country that is fueling the conflict in Sudan. That is why I am asking the Biden administration to provide us—the Senate, the Congress—with assurances that they have received credible commitments that the UAE will not send weapons to the murderous RSF in Sudan.

And I would submit that, given the fact that the UAE denies that they are engaged in such actions, they should be able to provide assurances that the Biden administration deems credible. And if President Biden believes that those assurances are credible, he should so inform the U.S. Senate as we consider their request for this arms sale.

As Representative JACOBS and I indicated in our letter to President Biden that we sent a short time ago, if we receive those assurances, we will, of course, take them into account as to how we decide to proceed on the joint resolution of disapproval. I say that because our goal is not to prevent the sale of arms to the UAE. The objective is to ensure that the UAE is not fueling the very crisis and conflict in Sudan that we, the United States, are seeking to end.

Indeed, in September of this year, President Biden said:

The United States will not abandon our commitment to the people of Sudan, who deserve freedom, peace, and justice. We call on all parties to this conflict to end the violence and refrain from fueling it, for the future of Sudan and for all Sudanese people.

I will say that again: and to all people who are fueling it.

The Biden administration has rightly put pressure on the RSF by sanctioning several high-level commanders for their atrocities, but it has yet to use the full leverage at its disposal to hold their primary external backer, the UAE, accountable. Indeed, just days after the New York Times story about their independent investigation of UAE arms sales to Sudan broke, the President finalized a major defense partnership with the UAE. And now, as we see, the administration is pushing for a billion dollars-plus arms sale to the Emirati Government.

The title of an op-ed in the Washington Post not that long ago put it bluntly, and I just quote the title of that editorial: ''Biden needs to pressure the UAE to help end Sudan's civil war.''

That is exactly right. And that is what we are calling on the Biden administration to do. I support a mutually beneficial bilateral relationship with the United Arab Emirates, and I am certainly not seeking to permanently end arms sales to that country. But a partnership with the United States needs to account for U.S. interests and values and priorities, and we need to make sure that foreign governments that benefit from a security relationship with the United States understand the importance that we hold on those important issues.

The bottom line is that the United States should not be sending weapons to the UAE so long as it is aiding and abetting a group that is one of the primary drivers of the humanitarian disaster in Sudan, the RSF. And the RSF has committed atrocities and crimes. That is why the United States should pause offensive arms transfers to the UAE unless and until the Biden administration can provide the U.S. Congress with assurances that the UAE is not providing and will no longer provide materiel support that aids and abets the killing spree of the RSF.

I hope that the Senate will come together on this important question, and I hope the President and the Biden administration will agree that securing those assurances from the UAE is essential to our goal of achieving peace and stability in Sudan, just as the President indicated we should be doing.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JOHN A. SPRING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in 2004, the city of Quincy, IL, elected a new mayor. In musing on how he intended to lead, he said: ''It's not about me. One person can't make everything happen. You've got to have a team.'' And while it may be true that great leaders need great teams supporting them, John Spring was the kind of leader, mayor, and community advocate you wanted leading your team. Today, it is with great sadness that I share the news of John's passing.

A native of Rock Island, IL, John graduated from Quincy College where he met his future wife Karen, who sadly passed away in 2021. They were married for 50 years. A theme that remained consistent throughout John's life was his dedication to serving his community. He first answered the call to service through teaching. John worked as a teacher in St. Louis and in the Quincy Public Schools, before he was hired at Quincy Notre Dame High School in 1976 as a biology teacher and assistant basketball and football coach.

His time at Quincy Notre Dame would provide him with one of his first leadership opportunities, when halfway through the school year, he was asked to put aside his teaching duties and serve as the school's first full-time director of development. He readily accepted the challenge. However, what John was not told when he was offered the job was that the school was in financial trouble, having borrowed more than $100,000 from a local bank to cover operation costs. For many, raising that sum of money would be an overwhelmingly daunting task. But believing in the importance of investing in quality educations for young people, John went to work. Soon after, the school's first fund drive—a way to raise money to cover the gap between the cost of running the school and the amount of tuition the school must charge—was born. It has since become a mainstay of Quincy Notre Dame's fundraising efforts.

Proving his leadership abilities and commitment to the school, John went on to become the executive director of the Quincy Notre Dame Foundation for 29 years. He loved the work. So, what might have compelled him to leave that role? A call to serve his community in another manner: as mayor. He first experienced Quincy's political scene as a member of the police and fire commission, and when then-mayor of Quincy Chuck Scholz decided in the fall of 2004 not to run for a fourth term, John once again answered the call to serve his community. His vision was simple: making life better for everyone in the community.

John served as Quincy's mayor for 8 years. He was a community favorite. During his tenure, he focused on updating transportation infrastructure and regional partnerships as a way to foster long-term economic growth. And, surprising to no one who knew John, he found success. During his tenure, he led successful efforts to expand Amtrak service to the city, upgrade Maine Street, and implement a multiyear infrastructure plan. And during the 2008 recession that saw many communities suffer, under John's leadership, Quincy opened new businesses, lowered taxes, and helped the county report the second-best employment record in the State.

His contributions to the community did not go unrecognized. In 2018, John was inducted into the Quincy Notre Dame Hall of Fame, and recently, he was selected as a 2024 delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

Like every good elected official ought to be, John was an attentive listener, a caring community member, and a truly decent man. In all things John did, he led with compassion, humility, and grace. He was a visionary leader who truly represented the best of us. Time and time again, his community called him to serve. And time and time again, he answered the call faithfully. Until the end, John would send my staff and me community updates and ideas to improve the lives of the citizens of West Central Illinois.

Loretta and I send our deepest condolences to John's children—Stacey, John, and Mike—and seven grandchildren as they cope with his tremendous loss. It was a privilege to call John a friend, and we will miss him dearly.

RECOGNIZING 40 YEARS OF METRA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if you walk around the streets of Chicago and ask people about how they get to and from the city—or around it—each day, I am sure many of them would tell you: Metra. Metra transports us to Cubs games—in fact, its busiest ridership day was November 4, 2016, during the Cubs World Series victory parade—and it makes sure we can get to work on time. Simply put, the people of Chicagoland depend on Metra rail to get from point A to point B safely and reliably. And this year marks 40 years of Metra's service to our city.

Chicago has a rich history when it comes to rail. A century ago, Chicago was the envy of cities across the country, with the largest public transportation system in the world. But by the late 1960s, the system was failing. To put the system back on track, in 1974, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) created the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). After a decade of reorganizing, restructuring, and reimagining what commuter rail could look like and who should be in charge of operating it, in 1985, Metropolitan Rail—or Metra—was born.

Since then, Metra has grown into a remarkable operation. With 243 stations on 11 rail lines, Metra is the fourth busiest commuter rail system in the country and the largest outside of New York City. Not only do I represent a State that has long been the railroad center of the country, but working railroads is a tradition in my family. I grew up in East St. Louis, IL, and both of my parents worked for the New York Central Railroad. My two brothers and I also worked for that same railroad. Because of this, I care deeply about making rail travel as good as it can be for Illinoisans. And Metra continues to deliver. It emerged from the pandemic with steadily improving customer satisfaction that hit 92 percent in 2022. Then, in 2023, Metra opened the year by securing its largest ever Federal grant through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's Mega Program: $117 million to rebuild 11 bridges along its Union Pacific North Line. And by the end of last year, Metra had seen the largest ridership increase of any transit agency in the Chicago region—a 37 percent increase—providing more than 32 million rides.

But Metra does more than just transport people; it responds to the needs of our city. Look no further than their All Stations Accessibility, or ''ASAP'' Program, an effort for which Metra was awarded more than one Federal grant to make its stations, trains, and platforms more accessible. While the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against Americans with disabilities and requires newly constructed buildings to be fully accessible, several legacy stations in Chicago remain inaccessible. Metra's ASAP initiative aims to make all stations accessible by 2038. Additionally, Metra ensures accessibility as it concerns affordability. In 1984, a one-way ticket to the farthest station cost $5.80. Today, you can travel to the same stations for just $6.75, which would cost $17.50 if that 1984 price kept up with inflation.

Metra also has made a substantial commitment to sustainability. As the climate crisis impacts our planet, sustainable transportation has been an increasing sector of interest. Metra knows this, and they will be among the first in the Nation to operate zero-emission train sets. These train sets will allow Metra to retire some of its oldest, most polluting diesel locomotives and reduce their carbon emissions, making Chicago's transportation cleaner and more reflective of the city's value of sustainability.

A final example that demonstrates Metra's commitment to Chicago is

their proposal to reconstruct and improve the 59th-60th / University of Chicago Station stop. These improvements are crucial because they will support anticipated ridership increases to the Obama Presidential Library, making the space more accessible to Chicagoans and visitors.

For so many Illinoisans, Metra is essential to getting around the Chicagoland area in an affordable and accessible way. Metra is public transportation that is just about as good as it comes. I join people across the Chicagoland area in thanking Metra for its 40 years of service to our city. Here is to many more years of safe, efficient, and dependable service.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JIM EHRLICH

● Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Jim Ehrlich on his retirement as executive director of the Colorado Potato Administrative Committee, or CPAC. Jim served in this role for nearly two decades. During that time, he advocated for commonsense agriculture policy rooted in his experience in Colorado's San Luis Valley.

CPAC, founded in 1941, is a Federal and State Marketing Order that supports San Luis Valley potato growers and shippers. The organization has helped farmers adopt new potato varieties and, each year, ensured high-quality standards for more than 2 billion pounds of Colorado potatoes.

Jim was born in Brighton, CO, and was raised on his grandparent's dairy farm after losing his mom at an early age. After serving in the Air Force, he moved to Colorado's San Luis Valley in 1996 to serve as the regional manager of the Coors Barley farm and grain elevator. He started at CPAC in 2006.

Over the years, I have worked with Jim on many issues important to Colorado's potato growers. We ensured potatoes are classified as a vegetable, are available in school lunches, and can be sold throughout Mexico. Jim has taught me about water and drought policy as well, including the complicated groundwater management challenges of the San Luis Valley.

Jim has also been a leader in his community beyond agriculture: He serves on the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable and the San Luis Valley Health hospital board. He is always a wise, pragmatic voice on the challenging issues faced by his community. Jim is direct, honest, kind, and humble, and I am proud to consider him a friend. On behalf of his family, growers and community, it is an honor to recognize and celebrate his work on behalf of rural Colorado.●

HONORING THE WOMEN VETERANS OF SW MISSOURI AMERICAN LEGION POST 1214

● Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the tenth anniversary of the Women Veterans of Southwest Missouri American Legion Post 1214.

The men and women who serve our country during war represent the courage, bravery, and resilience of the celebrated ''Greatest Generation,'' who demonstrated selflessness and diligence in the face of great adversity and struggle. Every citizen played their part to help in the war effort, whether that entailed fighting on the frontlines or bolstering manufacturing and domestic production. Everyone who stepped up to answer the call of duty deserves our honor and respect.

Today, the women veterans of southwest Missouri are still committed to service. After valiantly serving their country, they now serve in their communities. Whether Active Duty or retired, these women share a special comradery and sisterhood that unites them. Granted a temporary charter in December 2014 followed by a permanent charter in November 2015, the Women Veterans of Southwest Missouri American Legion Post 1214 marked the first post of its kind in the southwest region of Missouri. The Women Veterans of Southwest Missouri American Legion Post 1214 are faithful to the four pillars of the American Legion; they participate in programs to support our national security, promote Americanism, facilitate veterans' affairs and rehabilitation, and care for children and youth.

The American Legion continues to be a cherished force of good in the communities they inhabit, offering familiar traditions and selfless service that make a positive difference in the lives of so many people. They embody the best of America, and I wish the members of this post the best as they continue to serve their communities.●

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL CLAUDIA WIGGLESWORTH

● Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, we often think of the holiday season as a time for giving. For LTC Claudia Wigglesworth of Daleville, she exhibits this spirit of generosity all year long. The daughter of an Army sergeant, Claudia had originally planned to become a music teacher. But after participating in ROTC in college, she decided she wanted to continue her dad's military legacy.

Claudia used her leadership skills in several different roles within the military, including as a company commander in the Gulf War, at the Pentagon, at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, and as inspector general for Fort Jackson in South Carolina. She says that one of her most rewarding roles was serving as a recruiting battalion commander following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Her parting legacy was helping ensure that America was equipped with the manpower to defend itself following that day.

Claudia retired from the military in 2005 after 23 years of service. She and her husband Charlie—also an Army veteran—decided to move back home to Daleville. Claudia began giving of her time and talents to make her community a better place by organizing a food drive and environmental projects that still take place every year. She decided to run for city council, before running and being elected as the mayor of Daleville. Claudia's leadership during her tenure as mayor proved instrumental in expanding Daleville's Flight School Training Support Services, solidifying Daleville as the home of the largest helicopter simulation training center in the world.

She also volunteers countless hours with numerous regional organizations that help those in need in the Wiregrass and across the State. Claudia is the district chair for the Lions Club International Foundation and is a trustee for VFW Post 6020.

Alabama is grateful for Claudia's generosity that is making our State a better place to call home every day. It is my honor to recognize her as the December Veteran of the Month.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 12:43 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 3960. An act to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide a good faith exception to the imposition of fines for false assertions and certifications, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2950. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the Coastal Program of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to work with willing partners and provide support to efforts to assess, protect, restore, and enhance important coastal landscapes that provide fish and wildlife habitat on which certain Federal trust species depend, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5302. An act to designate the Air and Marine Operations Marine Unit of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection located at 101 Km 18.5 in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico, as the ''Michel O. Maceda Marine Unit''.

H.R. 5536. An act to require transparency in notices of funding opportunity, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5799. An act to designate the checkpoint of the United States Border Patrol located on United States Highway 90 West in Uvalde County, Texas, as the ''James R. Dominguez Border Patrol Checkpoint''.

H.R. 7218. An act to amend title III of the Public Health Service Act to extend the program for promotion of public health knowledge and awareness of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7438. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the FIFA World Cup 2026, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7764. An act to establish a commission to study the potential transfer of the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History to the Smithsonian Institution, and for other purposes.

H.R. 8932. An act to establish an earlier application processing cycle for the FAFSA.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

At 1:26 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 91. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal collectively to 60 diplomats, in recognition of their bravery and heroism during the Holocaust.

S. 4243. An act to award posthumously the Congressional Gold Medal to Shirley Chisholm.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 390. An act to amend the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–333; 54 U.S.C. 320101 note) to include all of Saratoga and Washington Counties in the boundaries of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.

H.R. 1695. An act to improve the visibility, accountability, and oversight of agency software asset management practices, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6116. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14280 South Military Trail in Delray Beach, Florida, as the ''Benjamin Berell Ferencz Post Office Building''.

H.R. 6751. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the life and legacy of Roberto Clemente.

H.R. 7158. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 201 East Battles Road in Santa Maria, California, as the ''Larry Lavagnino Post Office Building''.

H.R. 7480. An act to amend section 102(a)(20) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to require the exclusion of service-connected disability compensation when determining whether a person is a person of low and moderate income, a person of low income, or a person of moderate income, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7507. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 203 East 6th Street in Lexington, Nebraska, as the ''William E. and Elsie L. Barrett Post Office Building''.

H.R. 7508. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1285 Emancipation Highway in Fredericksburg, Virginia, as the ''Gladys P. Todd Post Office''.

H.R. 8219. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating certain land as the Lahaina National Heritage Area, and for other purposes.

H.R. 8641. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 401 Main Street in Brawley, California, as the ''Walter Francis Ulloa Memorial Post Office Building''.

H.R. 8717. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 20 West Main Street in Santaquin, Utah, as the ''SGT Bill Hooser Post Office Building''.

H.R. 8841. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 114 Center Street East in Roseau, Minnesota, as the ''Floyd B. Olson Post Office''.

H.R. 8868. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 609 Portsmouth Avenue in Greenland, New Hampshire, as the ''Chief Michael Maloney Post Office Building''.

H.R. 8909. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 82–6110 Mamalahoa Highway in Captain Cook, Hawaii, as the ''Army lst Lt. John Kuulei Kauhaihao Post Office Building''.

H.R. 8919. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 151 Highway 74 South in Peachtree City, Georgia, as the ''SFC Shawn McCloskey Post Office''.

H.R. 8976. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 20 West White Street in Millstadt, Illinois, as the ''Corporal Matthew A. Wyatt Post Office''.

H.R. 9285. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3913 Leland Avenue Northwest in Comstock Park, Michigan, as the ''Captain Miguel Justin Nava Post Office''.

H.R. 9322. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 675 Wolf Ledges Parkway in Akron, Ohio, as the ''Judge James R. Williams Post Office Building''.

H.R. 9360. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 300 Macedonia Lane in Knoxville, Tennessee, as the ''Reverend Harold Middlebrook Post Office Building''.

H.R. 9421. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 108 North Main Street in Bucoda, Washington, as the ''Mayor Rob Gordon Post Office''.

H.R. 9544. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 340 South Loudon Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland, as the ''United States Representative Elijah E. Cummings Post Office Building''.

H.R. 9549. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 125 South lst Avenue in Hillsboro, Oregon, as the ''Elizabeth Furse Post Office Building''.

H.R. 9566. An act to require government-wide source code sharing, and for other purposes.

H.R. 9580. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2777 Brentwood Road in Raleigh, North Carolina, as the ''Millie Dunn Veasey Post Office''.

H.R. 9775. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 119 North Anderson Street in Elwood, Indiana, as the ''Officer Noah Jacob Shahnavaz Post Office Building''.

H.R. 10065. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 802 North Tancahua Street in Corpus Christi, Texas, as the ''Captain Robert E. 'Bob' Batterson Post Office''.

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 amend the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–333; 54 U.S.C. 320101 note) to include all of Saratoga and Washington Counties in the boundaries of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 6116. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14280 South Military Trail in Delray Beach, Florida, as the ''Benjamin Berell Ferencz Post Office Building'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 6751. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the life and legacy of Roberto Clemente; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 7158. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 201 East Battles Road in Santa Maria, California, as the ''Larry Lavagnino Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 7480. An act to amend section 102(a)(20) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to require the exclusion of service-connected disability compensation when determining whether a person is a person of low and moderate income, a person of low income, or a person of moderate income, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 7507. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 203 East 6th Street in Lexington, Nebraska, as the ''William E. and Elsie L. Barrett Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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H.R. 9285. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3913 Leland Avenue Northwest in Comstock Park, Michigan, as the ''Captain Miguel Justin Nava Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 9322. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 675 Wolf Ledges Parkway in Akron, Ohio, as the ''Judge James R. Williams Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 9360. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 300 Macedonia Lane in Knoxville, Tennessee, as the ''Reverend Harold Middlebrook

Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 9421. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 108 North Main Street in Bucoda, Washington, as the ''Mayor Rob Gordon Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 9544. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 340 South Loudon Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland , as the ''United States Representative Elijah E. Cummings Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 9549. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 125 South 1st Avenue in Hillsboro, Oregon, as the ''Elizabeth Furse Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 9580. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2777 Brentwood Road in Raleigh, North Carolina, as the ''Millie Dunn Veasey Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 9775. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 119 North Anderson Street in Elwood, Indiana, as the ''Officer Noah Jacob Shahnavaz Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 10065. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 802 North Tancahua Street in Corpus Christi, Texas, as the ''Captain Robert E. 'Bob' Batterson Post Office''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

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

H.R. 1695. An act to improve the visibility, accountability, and oversight of agency software asset management practices, 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–6701. A communication from the Senior Counsel of Legal Policy, Office for Victims of Crime, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Implementing the Child Pornography Victims Reserve'' (RIN1105–AB57) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 25, 2024; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–6702. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fee Reasonableness Reviews; Effect of Loss of Accreditation on Direct Payment'' (RIN2900–AR93) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 21, 2024; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–6703. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determining Eligibility for Domiciliary Care'' (RIN2900–AR61) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 21, 2024; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–6704. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Legal Services for Homeless Veterans and Veterans At Risk for Homelessness Grant Program'' (RIN2900–AR33) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 21, 2024; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–6705. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy, Department of Transportation, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 21, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6706. A communication from the Fisheries Regulations Specialist, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries Off West Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Interim Specifications and Management Measures for Pacific Sardine'' (RIN0648–XE135) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 21, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6707. A communication from the Chief for Regulatory Development, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations'' (RIN2126–AC66) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 21, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6708. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Technical Corrections to the TTB Regulations'' (RIN1513–AB93) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 21, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6709. A communication from the Division Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''In the Matter of Jurisdictional Separations and Referral to the Federal-State Joint Board'' ((RIN3060–AL00) (FCC 24–118) (CC Docket No. 80–286)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6710. A communication from the Supervisory Program Analyst, Space Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revising Spectrum Sharing Rules for Non-Geostationary Orbit, Fixed-Satellite Service Systems'' ((IB Docket No. 21–456) (FCC 24–117)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 22, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6711. A communication from the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Communications Commission released a Report and Order entitled Connect America Fund; Alaska Connect Fund; Connect America Fund—Alaska Plan; Universal Service Reform—Mobility Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications; Telecommunications Carriers Eligible to Receive Universal Service Support'' ((RIN3060–AK57) (FCC 24–116)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6712. A communication from the Legal Yeoman, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Electronic Submission of Mariner Course Completion Data'' ((RIN1625–AC75) (Docket No. USCG–2021–0097)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 21, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6713. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fatty acids, C16–18 and C18-unsatd., esters with polyethylene glycol mono-Me ether in Pesticide Formulations; Tolerance Exemption'' (FRL No. 12393–01–OCSPP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2024; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–6714. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to the situation in Nicaragua that was declared in Executive Order 13851 of November 27, 2018; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6715. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13303 with respect to the stabilization of Iraq; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 4667. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish the Life Sciences Research Security Board, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–264).

S. 5093. A bill to sunset the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 118–265).

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. WYDEN for the Committee on Finance. David Samuel Johnson, of Virginia, to be Inspector General for Tax Administration, Department of the Treasury.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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 Ms. ERNST:

S. 5429. A bill to require each Executive department to establish policies and collect information regarding teleworking employees

of the Executive department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 5430. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to issue a right-of-way for an emergency exit on certain National Park Service land in the State of Virginia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 5431. A bill to prohibit the use of materials that use the term ''West Bank'', and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. KELLY):

S. 5432. A bill to facilitate direct primary care arrangements under Medicaid; to the Committee on Finance.

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

S. 5433. A bill to provide consumers with the right to delete their genomic data, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 5434. A bill to provide increased oversight of certain pardons, to clarify the applicability of bribery prohibitions to pardons and commutations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. OSSOFF):

S. 5435. A bill to prohibit certain entities from entering articles under the administrative exemption from duties for de minimis entries of articles; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. SCHMITT):

S. 5436. A bill to provide for certain requirements relating to cloud, data infrastructure, and foundation model procurement; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 5437. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to collect registration fees from members of the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 5438. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to establish a procedure to dismiss and deter strategic lawsuits against public participation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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

S. 5439. A bill to provide for water conservation, drought operations, and drought resilience at water resources development projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. LEE:

S. 5440. A bill to amend the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 to provide that the President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, the Chief of the Forest Service; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S. 5441. A bill to provide for offshore wind energy development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 5442. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to remove the differentiation between mead and low alcohol by volume wine for purposes of the tax imposed on wines; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 5443. A bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to improve protections for employees and retirees in business bankruptcies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. KELLY, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 5444. A bill to enhance the authority of the intelligence community to enter into public-private talent exchanges, and for other purposes; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

By Ms. HASSAN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 5445. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage of contraceptive items and services at no cost-sharing under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WELCH:

S. 5446. A bill to establish a program to fund electric public transportation in rural communities; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. HEINRICH:

S. 5447. A bill to establish a grant program to assist projects that use nonlethal coexistence measures to reduce property damage caused by native beavers, a keystone species, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 5448. A bill to clarify the time period for registering health care apprenticeships under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the ''National Apprenticeship Act'') and require the digitization of apprenticeship agreement forms under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. WARNER, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 5449. A bill to create an Office of Cybersecurity at the Federal Trade Commission for supervision of data security at consumer reporting agencies, to require the promulgation of regulations establishing standards for effective cybersecurity at consumer reporting agencies, to impose penalties on credit reporting agencies for cybersecurity breaches that put sensitive consumer data at risk, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. ROUNDS (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 5450. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to permit a licensed importer, licensed manufacturer, or licensed dealer to notify chief law enforcement officers electronically, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. HICKENLOOPER):

S. 5451. A bill to enhance the economic and national security of the United States by securing a reliable supply of critical minerals and rare earth elements through trade agreements and strategic partnerships; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S.J. Res. 119. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Internal Revenue Service relating to ''Advanced Manufacturing Production Credit''; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S.J. Res. 120. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to normalize vacancies and appointments for justices of the Supreme Court of the United States and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. SMITH:

S. Res. 922. A resolution expressing support for the designation of October 2024 as ''National Co-Op Month'' and commending the cooperative business model and the member-owners, businesses, employees, farmers, ranchers, and practitioners who use the cooperative business model to positively impact the economy and society; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 953

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 953, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a rural health center innovation awards program and a rural health department enhancement program, and for other purposes.

S. 1024

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1024, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to eligible entities to develop and implement a comprehensive program to promote student access to defibrillation in public elementary schools and secondary schools.

S. 1266

At the request of Mr. WARNOCK, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1266, a bill to amend titles 10 and 38, United State Code, to improve benefits and services for surviving spouses, and for other purposes.

S. 1557

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. BUTLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1557, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the low-income housing credit, and for other purposes.

S. 2570

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2570, a bill to amend the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 to provide technical assistance to improve infrastructure in foreign markets for United States agricultural commodities.

S. 2880

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2880, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand the scope of practitioners eligible for payment for telehealth services

under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 3058

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3058, a bill to award a congressional gold medal to the United Negro College Fund, Inc. and the institutions that make up its membership on the occasion of its 80th year of existence.

S. 3294

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3294, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act with respect to reimbursements under the child and adult care food program, and for other purposes.

S. 3369

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3369, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to restrict the possession of certain firearms, and for other purposes.

S. 3981

At the request of Mr. HICKENLOOPER, the names of the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3981, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a program of research, training, and investigation related to Down syndrome, and for other purposes.

S. 4004

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. HELMY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4004, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 4477

At the request of Mrs. BRITT, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 4477, a bill to reauthorize the Second Chance Act of 2007.

S. 4510

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4510, a bill to amend the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 to delay implementation of the inclusion of oral-only ESRD-related drugs in the Medicare ESRD prospective payment system.

S. 4514

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE) were added as cosponsors of S. 4514, a bill to clarify that amounts from declinations should be deposited in the Crime Victims Fund and to temporarily provide additional deposits into the Crime Victims Fund.

S. 5208

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5208, a bill to establish protections for warehouse workers, and for other purposes.

S. 5392

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) were added as cosponsors of S. 5392, a bill to prohibit discrimination based on political affiliation in granting disaster assistance.

S. 5415

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 5415, a bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to prohibit nonconsensual release of a nondebtor entity's liability to an entity other than the debtor, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 8

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Ms. LUMMIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 8, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that tax-exempt fraternal benefit societies have historically provided and continue to provide critical benefits to the people and communities of the United States.

S. RES. 74

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 74, a resolution condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 5442. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to remove the differentiation between mead and low alcohol by volume wine for purposes of the tax imposed on wines; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 5442

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Bubble Tax Modernization Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. REMOVING DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN MEAD AND LOW ALCOHOL BY VOLUME WINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5041(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''(h) LOW ALCOHOL BY VOLUME WINE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsections (a) and (b)(1), low alcohol by volume wine shall be deemed to be still wines containing not more than 16 percent of alcohol by volume.

''(2) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, the term 'low alcohol by volume wine' means a wine—

''(A) containing not more than 0.64 gram of carbon dioxide per hundred milliliters of wine, except that the Secretary may by regulations prescribe such tolerances to this limitation as may be reasonably necessary in good commercial practice, and

''(B) which contains less than 8.5 percent alcohol by volume.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to wine removed after December 31, 2024.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 5443. A bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to improve protections for employees and retirees in business bankruptcies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 5443

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Protecting Employees and Retirees in Business Bankruptcies Act of 2024''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Findings.
TITLE I—IMPROVING RECOVERIES FOR EMPLOYEES AND RETIREES
Sec. 101. Increased wage priority.
Sec. 102. Claim for stock value losses in defined contribution plans.
Sec. 103. Priority for severance pay and contributions to employee benefit plans.
Sec. 104. Financial returns for employees and retirees.
Sec. 105. Priority for WARN Act damages.
TITLE II—REDUCING EMPLOYEES' AND RETIREES' LOSSES
Sec. 201. Rejection of collective bargaining agreements.
Sec. 202. Payment of insurance benefits to retired employees.
Sec. 203. Protection of employee benefits in a sale of assets.
Sec. 204. Claim for pension losses.
Sec. 205. Payments by secured lender.
Sec. 206. Preservation of jobs and benefits.
Sec. 207. Termination of exclusivity.
Sec. 208. Claim for withdrawal liability.
TITLE III—RESTRICTING EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION PROGRAMS
Sec. 301. Executive compensation upon exit from bankruptcy.
Sec. 302. Limitations on executive compensation enhancements.
Sec. 303. Prohibition against special compensation payments.
Sec. 304. Assumption of executive benefit plans.

Sec. 305. Recovery of executive compensation.
Sec. 306. Preferential compensation transfer.
TITLE IV—OTHER PROVISIONS
Sec. 401. Union proof of claim.
Sec. 402. Exception from automatic stay.
Sec. 403. Effect on collective bargaining agreements under the Railway Labor Act.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Business bankruptcies have increased sharply in recent years and remain at high levels. These bankruptcies include several of the largest business bankruptcy filings in history. As the use of bankruptcy has expanded, job preservation and retirement security are placed at greater risk.

(2) Laws enacted to improve recoveries for employees and retirees and limit their losses in bankruptcy cases have not kept pace with the increasing and broader use of bankruptcy by businesses in all sectors of the economy. However, while protections for employees and retirees in bankruptcy cases have eroded, management compensation plans devised for those in charge of troubled businesses have become more prevalent and are escaping adequate scrutiny.

(3) Changes in the law regarding these matters are urgently needed as bankruptcy is used to address increasingly more complex and diverse conditions affecting troubled businesses and industries.

TITLE I—IMPROVING RECOVERIES FOR EMPLOYEES AND RETIREES

SEC. 101. INCREASED WAGE PRIORITY.

Section 507(a) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively;

(B) in the matter preceding clause (i), as so redesignated, by inserting ''(A)'' before ''Fourth'';

(C) in subparagraph (A), as so designated, in the matter preceding clause (i), as so redesignated—

(i) by striking ''$10,000'' and inserting ''$20,000'';

(ii) by striking ''within 180 days''; and

(iii) by striking ''or the date of the cessation of the debtor's business, whichever occurs first,''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) Severance pay described in subparagraph (A)(i) shall be deemed earned in full upon the layoff or termination of employment of the individual to whom the severance is owed.''; and

(2) in paragraph (5)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking ''within 180 days''; and

(ii) by striking ''or the date of the cessation of the debtor's business, whichever occurs first''; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

''(B) for each such plan, to the extent of the number of employees covered by each such plan, multiplied by $20,000.''.

SEC. 102. CLAIM FOR STOCK VALUE LOSSES IN DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLANS.

Section 101(5) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) right or interest in equity securities of the debtor, or an affiliate of the debtor, if—

''(i) the equity securities are held in a defined contribution plan (within the meaning of section 3(34) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1002(34))) for the benefit of an individual who is not an insider, a senior executive officer, or any of the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers;

''(ii) the equity securities were attributable to either employer contributions by the debtor or an affiliate of the debtor, or elective deferrals (within the meaning of section 402(g) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986), and any earnings thereon; and

''(iii) an employer or plan sponsor who has commenced a case under this title has committed fraud with respect to such plan or has otherwise breached a duty to the participant that has proximately caused the loss of value.''.

SEC. 103. PRIORITY FOR SEVERANCE PAY AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS.

Section 503(b) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (8)(B), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (9), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(10) severance pay owed to employees of the debtor (other than to an insider of the debtor, a senior executive officer of the debtor, the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers, any department or division manager of the debtor, or any consultant providing services to the debtor), under a plan, program, or policy generally applicable to employees of the debtor (but not under an individual contract of employment), or owed pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement, for layoff or termination on or after the date of the filing of the petition, which pay shall be deemed earned in full upon such layoff or termination of employment; and

''(11) any contribution to an employee benefit plan that is due on or after the date of the filing of the petition.''.

SEC. 104. FINANCIAL RETURNS FOR EMPLOYEES AND RETIREES.

Section 1129(a) of title 11, United States Code is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (13) and inserting the following:

''(13) With respect to retiree benefits, as that term is defined in section 1114(a), the plan—

''(A) provides for the continuation after the effective date of the plan of payment of all retiree benefits at the level established pursuant to subsection (e)(1)(B) or (g) of section 1114 at any time before the date of confirmation of the plan, for the duration of the period for which the debtor has obligated itself to provide such benefits, or if no modifications are made before confirmation of the plan, the continuation of all such retiree benefits maintained or established in whole or in part by the debtor before the date of the filing of the petition; and

''(B) provides for recovery of claims arising from the modification of retiree benefits or for other financial returns, as negotiated by the debtor and the authorized representative (to the extent that such returns are paid under, rather than outside of, a plan).''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(17) The plan provides for recovery of damages payable for the rejection of a collective bargaining agreement, or for other financial returns as negotiated by the debtor and the authorized representative under section 1113 (to the extent that such returns are paid under, rather than outside of, a plan).''.

SEC. 105. PRIORITY FOR WARN ACT DAMAGES.

Section 503(b)(1)(A)(ii) of title 11, United States Code is amended by inserting ''any back pay, civil penalty, or damages for a violation of any Federal or State labor and employment law, including the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (29 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.) and any comparable State law, and'' before ''wages and benefits'' each place that term appears.

TITLE II—REDUCING EMPLOYEES' AND RETIREES' LOSSES

SEC. 201. REJECTION OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS.

Section 1113 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by striking subsections (a) through (f) and inserting the following:

''(a) The debtor in possession, or the trustee if one has been appointed under this chapter, other than as provided in section 103(m) for collective bargaining agreements covered by the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 151 et seq.), may reject a collective bargaining agreement only in accordance with this section. In this section, a reference to the trustee includes the debtor in possession.

''(b) No provision of this title shall be construed to permit the trustee to unilaterally terminate or alter any provision of a collective bargaining agreement before complying with this section. The trustee shall timely pay all monetary obligations arising under the terms of the collective bargaining agreement. Any such payment required to be made before a plan confirmed under section 1129 is effective has the status of an allowed administrative expense under section 503.

''(c)(1) If the trustee seeks modification of a collective bargaining agreement, the trustee shall provide notice to the labor organization representing the employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement that modifications are being proposed under this section, and shall promptly provide an initial proposal for modifications to the collective bargaining agreement. Thereafter, the trustee shall confer in good faith with the labor organization, at reasonable times and for a reasonable period in light of the complexity of the case, in attempting to reach mutually acceptable modifications of the collective bargaining agreement.

''(2) The initial proposal and subsequent proposals by the trustee for modification of a collective bargaining agreement shall be based upon a business plan for the reorganization of the debtor, and shall reflect the most complete and reliable information available. The trustee shall provide to the labor organization all information that is relevant for negotiations. The court may enter a protective order to prevent the disclosure of information if disclosure could compromise the position of the debtor with respect to the competitors in the industry of the debtor, subject to the needs of the labor organization to evaluate the proposals of the trustee and any application for rejection of the collective bargaining agreement or for interim relief pursuant to this section.

''(3) In consideration of Federal policy encouraging the practice and process of collective bargaining and in recognition of the bargained-for expectations of the employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement, modifications proposed by the trustee—

''(A) shall be proposed only as part of a program of workforce and nonworkforce cost savings devised for the reorganization of the debtor, including savings in management personnel costs;

''(B) shall be limited to modifications designed to achieve a specified aggregate financial contribution for the employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement (taking into consideration any labor cost savings negotiated within the 12-month period before the filing of the petition), and shall be not more than the minimum savings essential to

permit the debtor to exit bankruptcy, such that confirmation of a plan of reorganization is not likely to be followed by the liquidation, or the need for further financial reorganization, of the debtor (or any successor to the debtor) in the short term; and

''(C) shall not be disproportionate or overly burden the employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement, either in the amount of the cost savings sought from such employees or the nature of the modifications.

''(d)(1) If, after a period of negotiations, the trustee and the labor organization have not reached an agreement over mutually satisfactory modifications, and further negotiations are not likely to produce mutually satisfactory modifications, the trustee may file a motion seeking rejection of the collective bargaining agreement after notice and a hearing. Absent agreement of the parties, no such hearing shall be held before the expiration of the 21-day period beginning on the date on which notice of the hearing is provided to the labor organization representing the employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement. Only the debtor and the labor organization may appear and be heard at such hearing. An application for rejection shall seek rejection effective upon the entry of an order granting the relief.

''(2) In consideration of Federal policy encouraging the practice and process of collective bargaining and in recognition of the bargained-for expectations of the employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement, the court may grant a motion seeking rejection of a collective bargaining agreement only if, based on clear and convincing evidence—

''(A) the court finds that the trustee has complied with the requirements of subsection (c);

''(B) the court has considered alternative proposals by the labor organization and has concluded that such proposals do not meet the requirements of subsection (c)(3)(B);

''(C) the court finds that further negotiations regarding the proposal of the trustee or an alternative proposal by the labor organization are not likely to produce an agreement;

''(D) the court finds that implementation of the proposal of the trustee shall not—

''(i) cause a material diminution in the purchasing power of the employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement;

''(ii) adversely affect the ability of the debtor to retain an experienced and qualified workforce; or

''(iii) impair the labor relations of the debtor such that the ability to achieve a feasible reorganization would be compromised; and

''(E) the court concludes that rejection of the collective bargaining agreement and immediate implementation of the proposal of the trustee is essential to permit the debtor to exit bankruptcy, such that confirmation of a plan of reorganization is not likely to be followed by liquidation, or the need for further financial reorganization, of the debtor (or any successor to the debtor) in the short term.

''(3) If, during the bankruptcy, the trustee has implemented a program of incentive pay, bonuses, or other financial returns for an insider of the debtor, a senior executive officer of the debtor, any of the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers, any department or division manager of the debtor, or any consultant providing services to the debtor, or such a program was implemented within 180 days before the date of the filing of the petition, the court shall presume that the trustee has failed to satisfy the requirements of subsection (c)(3)(C).

''(4) In no case shall the court enter an order rejecting a collective bargaining agreement that would result in modifications to a level lower than the level proposed by the trustee in the proposal found by the court to have complied with the requirements of this section.

''(5) At any time after the date on which an order rejecting a collective bargaining agreement is entered, or in the case of a collective bargaining agreement entered into between the trustee and the labor organization providing mutually satisfactory modifications, at any time after that collective bargaining agreement has been entered into, the labor organization may apply to the court for an order seeking an increase in the level of wages or benefits, or relief from working conditions, based upon changed circumstances. The court shall grant the request only if the increase or other relief is not inconsistent with the standard set forth in paragraph (2)(E).

''(e) During a period during which a collective bargaining agreement at issue under this section continues in effect and a motion for rejection of the collective bargaining agreement has been filed, if essential to the continuation of the business of the debtor or in order to avoid irreparable damage to the estate, the court, after notice and a hearing, may authorize the trustee to implement interim changes in the terms, conditions, wages, benefits, or work rules provided by the collective bargaining agreement. Any hearing under this subsection shall be scheduled in accordance with the needs of the trustee. The implementation of such interim changes shall not render the application for rejection moot and may be authorized for not more than 14 days in total.

''(f)(1) Rejection of a collective bargaining agreement constitutes a breach of the collective bargaining agreement, and shall be effective no earlier than the entry of an order granting such relief.

''(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), solely for purposes of determining and allowing a claim arising from the rejection of a collective bargaining agreement, rejection shall be treated as rejection of an executory contract under section 365(g) and shall be allowed or disallowed in accordance with section 502(g)(1). No claim for rejection damages shall be limited by section 502(b)(7). Economic self-help by a labor organization shall be permitted upon a court order granting a motion to reject a collective bargaining agreement under subsection (d) or pursuant to subsection (e), and no provision of this title or of any other provision of Federal or State law may be construed to the contrary.

''(g) The trustee shall provide for the reasonable fees and costs incurred by a labor organization under this section, upon request and after notice and a hearing.

''(h) A collective bargaining agreement that is assumed shall be assumed in accordance with section 365.''.

SEC. 202. PAYMENT OF INSURANCE BENEFITS TO RETIRED EMPLOYEES.

Section 1114 of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting '', without regard to whether the debtor asserts a right to unilaterally modify such payments under such plan, fund, or program'' before the period at the end;

(2) in subsection (b)(2), by inserting '', and a labor organization serving as the authorized representative under subsection (c)(1),'' after ''section'';

(3) by striking subsection (f) and inserting the following:

''(f)(1) If a trustee seeks modification of retiree benefits, the trustee shall provide a notice to the authorized representative that modifications are being proposed pursuant to this section, and shall promptly provide an initial proposal. Thereafter, the trustee shall confer in good faith with the authorized representative at reasonable times and for a reasonable period in light of the complexity of the case in attempting to reach mutually satisfactory modifications.

''(2) The initial proposal and subsequent proposals by the trustee shall be based upon a business plan for the reorganization of the debtor and shall reflect the most complete and reliable information available. The trustee shall provide to the authorized representative all information that is relevant for the negotiations. The court may enter a protective order to prevent the disclosure of information if disclosure could compromise the position of the debtor with respect to the competitors in the industry of the debtor, subject to the needs of the authorized representative to evaluate the proposals of the trustee and an application pursuant to subsection (g) or (h).

''(3) Modifications proposed by the trustee—

''(A) shall be proposed only as part of a program of workforce and nonworkforce cost savings devised for the reorganization of the debtor, including savings in management personnel costs;

''(B) shall be limited to modifications that are designed to achieve a specified aggregate financial contribution for the retiree group represented by the authorized representative (taking into consideration any cost savings implemented within the 12-month period before the date of filing of the petition with respect to the retiree group), and shall be no more than the minimum savings essential to permit the debtor to exit bankruptcy, such that confirmation of a plan of reorganization is not likely to be followed by the liquidation, or the need for further financial reorganization, of the debtor (or any successor to the debtor) in the short term; and

''(C) shall not be disproportionate or overly burden the retiree group, either in the amount of the cost savings sought from such group or the nature of the modifications.'';

(4) in subsection (g)—

(A) by striking the subsection designation and all that follows through the semicolon at the end of paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(g)(1) If, after a period of negotiations, the trustee and the authorized representative have not reached agreement over mutually satisfactory modifications and further negotiations are not likely to produce mutually satisfactory modifications, the trustee may file a motion seeking modifications in the payment of retiree benefits after notice and a hearing. Absent agreement of the parties, no such hearing shall be held before the expiration of the 21-day period beginning on the date on which notice of the hearing is provided to the authorized representative. Only the debtor and the authorized representative may appear and be heard at such hearing.

''(2) The court may grant a motion to modify the payment of retiree benefits only if, based on clear and convincing evidence—

''(A) the court finds that the trustee has complied with the requirements of subsection (f);

''(B) the court has considered alternative proposals by the authorized representative and has determined that such proposals do not meet the requirements of subsection (f)(3)(B);

''(C) the court finds that further negotiations regarding the proposal of the trustee or an alternative proposal by the authorized representative are not likely to produce a mutually satisfactory agreement;

''(D) the court finds that implementation of the proposal shall not cause irreparable harm to the affected retirees; and

''(E) the court concludes that an order granting the motion and immediate implementation of the proposal of the trustee is essential to permit the debtor to exit bankruptcy, such that confirmation of a plan of reorganization is not likely to be followed by liquidation, or the need for further financial reorganization, of the debtor (or a successor to the debtor) in the short term.

''(3) If, during the bankruptcy, a trustee has implemented a program of incentive pay, bonuses, or other financial returns for insiders of the debtor, senior executive officers of the debtor, the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers, any department or division managers of the debtor, or any consultants providing services to the debtor, or such a program was implemented within 180 days before the date of the filing of the petition, the court shall presume that the trustee has failed to satisfy the requirements of subsection (f)(3)(C).''; and

(B) in the matter following paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking ''except that in no case'' and inserting the following:

''(4) In no case''; and

(ii) by striking ''is consistent with the standard set forth in paragraph (3)'' and inserting ''assures that all creditors, the debtor, and all of the affected parties are treated fairly and equitably, and is clearly favored by the balance of the equities'';

(5) in subsection (h)(1), by inserting ''for a period of not longer than 14 days'' before the period; and

(6) by striking subsection (k) and redesignating subsections (l) and (m) as subsections (k) and (l), respectively.

SEC. 203. PROTECTION OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS IN A SALE OF ASSETS.

(a) REQUIREMENT TO PRESERVE JOBS AND MAINTAIN TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.—Section 363 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(q)(1) In approving a sale or lease of property of the estate under this section or a plan under chapter 11, the court shall give substantial weight to the extent to which a prospective purchaser or lessee of the property will—

''(A) preserve the jobs of the employees of the debtor;

''(B) maintain the terms and conditions of employment of the employees of the debtor; and

''(C) assume or match the pension and health benefit obligations of the debtor to the retirees of the debtor.

''(2) If there are two or more offers to purchase or lease property of the estate under this section or a plan under chapter 11, the court shall approve the offer of the prospective purchaser or lessee that will best carry out the actions described in subparagraphs (A) through (C) of paragraph (1).''.

(b) CHAPTER 11 PLANS.—Section 1129(a) of title 11, United States Code is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(17) If the plan provides for the sale of all or substantially all of the property of the estate, the plan requires the purchaser of the sale to carry out the actions described in subparagraphs (A) through (C) of section 363(q)(1).''.

SEC. 204. CLAIM FOR PENSION LOSSES.

Section 502 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) The court shall allow a claim asserted by an active or retired participant, or by a labor organization representing such participants, in a defined benefit plan terminated under section 4041 or 4042 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1341, 1342), for any shortfall in pension benefits accrued as of the effective date of the termination of such pension plan as a result of the termination of the plan and limitations upon the payment of benefits imposed pursuant to section 4022 of that Act (29 U.S.C. 1322), notwithstanding any claim asserted and collected by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation with respect to such termination.

''(m) The court shall allow a claim of a kind described in section 101(5)(C) by an active or retired participant in a defined contribution plan (within the meaning of section 3(34) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1002(34))), or by a labor organization representing such participants. The amount of such claim shall be measured by the market value of the stock at the time of contribution to, or purchase by, the plan and the value as of the commencement of the case.''.

SEC. 205. PAYMENTS BY SECURED LENDER.

Section 506(c) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by adding ''(1)'' after ''(c)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) If one or more employees of the debtor have not received wages, accrued vacation, severance, or any other compensation owed under a plan, program, policy or practice of the debtor, or pursuant to the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, for services rendered on or after the date of the commencement of the case, or the debtor has not made a contribution due under an employee benefit plan on or after the date of the commencement of the case, such unpaid obligations shall be deemed reasonable, necessary costs and expenses of preserving, or disposing of, property securing an allowed secured claim and benefitting the holder of the allowed secured claim, and shall be recovered by the trustee for payment to the employees or the employee benefit plan, as applicable, even if the trustee, or a successor or predecessor in interest has otherwise waived the provisions of this subsection under an agreement with the holder of the allowed secured claim or a successor or predecessor in interest.''.

SEC. 206. PRESERVATION OF JOBS AND BENEFITS.

Chapter 11 of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting before section 1101 the following:

''§ 1100. Statement of purpose

''A debtor commencing a case under this chapter shall have as its principal purpose the reorganization of its business to preserve going concern value to the maximum extent possible through the productive use of its assets and the preservation of jobs that will sustain productive economic activity.'';

(2) in section 1129—

(A) in subsection (a), as amended by section 104 of this Act, by adding at the end the following:

''(18) The debtor has demonstrated that the reorganization preserves going concern value to the maximum extent possible through the productive use of the assets of the debtor and preserves jobs that sustain productive economic activity.''; and

(B) in subsection (c)—

(i) by inserting ''(1)'' after ''(c)''; and

(ii) by striking the last sentence and inserting the following:

''(2) If the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) are met with respect to more than 1 plan, the court shall, in determining which plan to confirm—

''(A) consider the extent to which each plan would preserve going concern value through the productive use of the assets of the debtor and the preservation of jobs that sustain productive economic activity; and

''(B) confirm the plan that better serves such interests.

''(3) A plan that incorporates the terms of a settlement with a labor organization representing employees of the debtor shall presumptively constitute the plan that satisfies this subsection.''; and

(3) in the table of sections, by inserting before the item relating to section 1101 the following:

''1100. Statement of purpose.''.

SEC. 207. TERMINATION OF EXCLUSIVITY.

Section 1121(d) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) For purposes of this subsection, cause for reducing the 120-day period or the 180-day period includes—

''(A) the filing of a motion pursuant to section 1113 seeking rejection of a collective bargaining agreement if a plan based upon an alternative proposal by the labor organization is reasonably likely to be confirmed within a reasonable time; and

''(B) the proposed filing of a plan by a proponent other than the debtor, which incorporates the terms of a settlement with a labor organization if such plan is reasonably likely to be confirmed within a reasonable time.''.

SEC. 208. CLAIM FOR WITHDRAWAL LIABILITY.

Section 503(b) of title 11, United States Code, as amended by section 103 of this Act, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(12) with respect to withdrawal liability owed to a multi-employer pension plan for a complete or partial withdrawal pursuant to section 4201 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1381) where such withdrawal occurs on or after the commencement of the case, an amount equal to the total benefits payable from such pension plan that accrued as a result of employees' services rendered to the debtor during the period beginning on the date of commencement of the case and ending on the date of the withdrawal from the plan.''.

TITLE III—RESTRICTING EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION PROGRAMS

SEC. 301. EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION UPON EXIT FROM BANKRUPTCY.

Section 1129(a) of title 11, United States Code, as amended by sections 104 and 206 of this Act, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by adding ''(A)'' after ''(4)'';

(B) in subparagraph (A), as so designated, by striking ''Any payment'' and inserting ''Subject to subparagraph (B), any payment''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(B)(i) Subject to clause (ii), the plan does not provide for payments or other distributions to, or for the benefit of, an insider of the debtor, a senior executive officer of the debtor, any of the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers, any department or division manager of the debtor, or any consultant providing services to the debtor, unless—

''(I) the payments or other distributions are part of a program that is generally applicable to all full-time employees of the debtor; and

''(II) the payments or distributions do not exceed the compensation limits established in section 503(c)(1) in comparison to the nonmanagement workforce of the debtor.

''(ii) The requirement under clause (i) shall not apply to the compensation described in paragraph (5)(C).'';

(2) in paragraph (5)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) the compensation disclosed under subparagraph (B) has been approved by, or is subject to the approval of, the court as—

''(i) reasonable when compared to individuals holding comparable positions at comparable companies in the same industry as the debtor;

''(ii) not more than the amount corresponding to the 50th percentile of the compensation of the individuals described in clause (i); and

''(iii) not excessive or disproportionate in light of economic losses of the nonmanagement workforce of the debtor.''.

SEC. 302. LIMITATIONS ON EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION ENHANCEMENTS.

Section 503(c) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting ''and subject to section 363(b)(3)'' after ''subsection (b)'';

(2) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(i) by inserting '', a senior executive officer of the debtor, any the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers, any department or division manager of the debtor, or any consultant providing services to the debtor'' before ''for the purpose''; and

(ii) by inserting ''or for the payment of performance or incentive compensation, or a bonus of any kind, or other financial returns designed to replace or enhance incentive, stock, or other compensation in effect before the date of the commencement of the case,'' after ''remain with the debtor's business,'';

(B) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) the transfer or obligation is part of a program that is generally applicable to all full-time employees of the debtor; and'';

(C) by striking subparagraph (B);

(D) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B);

(E) in subparagraph (B), as so redesignated—

(i) in clause (i), by striking ''10'' and inserting ''2''; and

(ii) in clause (ii)—

(I) by striking ''25'' and inserting ''10''; and

(II) by striking ''insider'' and inserting ''person'';

(3) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting '', a senior executive officer of the debtor, any of the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers, any department or division manager of the debtor, or any consultant providing services to the debtor,'' before '', unless''; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''10'' and inserting ''2''; and

(4) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) other transfers or obligations to, or for the benefit of, an insider of the debtor, a senior executive officer of the debtor, the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers, any department or division manager of the debtor, or any consultant providing services to the debtor that are outside of the ordinary course of business, except as part of a plan of reorganization and subject to the approval of the court under paragraphs (4) and (5) of section 1129(a).''.

SEC. 303. PROHIBITION AGAINST SPECIAL COMPENSATION PAYMENTS.

Section 363 of title 11, United States Code, as amended by section 203 of this Act, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following:

''(3) No plan, program, or other transfer or obligation to, or for the benefit of, an insider of the debtor, a senior executive officer of the debtor, the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers, any department or division manager of the debtor, or any consultant providing services to the debtor shall be approved if the debtor has, on or after the date that is 1 year before the date of the filing of the petition—

''(A) discontinued any plan, program, policy, or practice of paying severance pay to the nonmanagement workforce of the debtor; or

''(B) modified any plan, program, policy, or practice described in subparagraph (A) in order to reduce benefits under the plan, program, policy, or practice.''; and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''If the business'' and inserting ''Except as provided in paragraph (5), if the business''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) In the case of a transaction that is a transfer or obligation described in paragraphs (1) through (3) of section 503(c), the trustee shall obtain the prior approval of the court after notice and an opportunity for a hearing.''.

SEC. 304. ASSUMPTION OF EXECUTIVE BENEFIT PLANS.

Section 365 of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''and (d)'' and inserting ''(d), (q), and (r)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(q) No deferred compensation arrangement for the benefit of an insider of the debtor, a senior executive officer of the debtor, or any of the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers shall be assumed if a defined benefit plan for employees of the debtor has been terminated pursuant to section 4041 or 4042 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1341, 1342), on or after the date that is 1 year before the date of the commencement of the case.

''(r) No plan, fund, program, or contract to provide retiree benefits for insiders of the debtor, senior executive officers of the debtor, or the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders or senior executive officers shall be assumed if the debtor has obtained relief under subsection (g) or (h) of section 1114 to impose reductions in retiree benefits or under subsection (d) or (e) of section 1113 to impose reductions in the health benefits of active employees of the debtor, or has otherwise reduced or eliminated health benefits for employees or retirees of the debtor on are after the date that is 1 year before the date of the commencement of the case.''.

SEC. 305. RECOVERY OF EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 5 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 562 the following:

''§ 563. Recovery of executive compensation

''(a) If a debtor has obtained relief under section 1113(d) or section 1114(g), by which the debtor reduces the cost of its obligations under a collective bargaining agreement or a plan, fund, or program for retiree benefits (as defined in section 1114(a)), the court, in granting relief, shall determine the percentage diminution in the value of the obligations when compared to the obligations of the debtor under the collective bargaining agreement, or with respect to retiree benefits, as of the date of the commencement of the case under this title before granting such relief. In making its determination, the court shall include reductions in benefits, if any, as a result of the termination pursuant to section 4041 or 4042 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1341, 1342), of a defined benefit plan administered by the debtor, or for which the debtor is a contributing employer, effective at any time on or after 180 days before the date of the commencement of a case under this title. The court shall not take into account pension benefits paid or payable under that Act as a result of any such termination.

''(b) If a defined benefit pension plan administered by the debtor, or for which the debtor is a contributing employer, has been terminated pursuant to section 4041 or 4042 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1341, 1342), effective at any time on or after 180 days before the date of the commencement of a case under this title, but a debtor has not obtained relief under section 1113(d), or section 1114(g), the court, upon motion of a party in interest, shall determine the percentage diminution in the value of benefit obligations when compared to the total benefit liabilities before such termination. The court shall not take into account pension benefits paid or payable under title IV of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1301 et seq.) as a result of any such termination.

''(c) Upon the determination of the percentage diminution in value under subsection (a) or (b), the estate shall have a claim for the return of the same percentage of the compensation paid, directly or indirectly (including any transfer to a self-settled trust or similar device, or to a nonqualified deferred compensation plan under section 409A(d)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) to any officer of the debtor serving as member of the board of directors of the debtor within the year before the date of the commencement of the case, and any individual serving as chairman or lead director of the board of directors at the time of the granting of relief under section 1113 or 1114 or, if no such relief has been granted, the termination of the defined benefit plan.

''(d) The trustee or a committee appointed pursuant to section 1102 may commence an action to recover such claims, except that if neither the trustee nor such committee commences an action to recover such claim by the first date set for the hearing on the confirmation of plan under section 1129, any party in interest may apply to the court for authority to recover such claim for the benefit of the estate. The costs of recovery shall be borne by the estate.

''(e) The court shall not award postpetition compensation under section 503(c) or otherwise to any person subject to subsection (c) of this section if there is a reasonable likelihood that such compensation is intended to reimburse or replace compensation recovered by the estate under this section.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 5 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 562 the following:

''563. Recovery of executive compensation.''.

SEC. 306. PREFERENTIAL COMPENSATION TRANSFER.

Section 547 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(j)(1) The trustee may avoid a transfer—

''(A) made—

''(i) to, or for the benefit of, an insider of the debtor (including an obligation incurred for the benefit of an insider under an employment contract), a senior executive officer of the debtor, the 20 highest compensated employees of the debtor who are not insiders

or senior executive officers, any department or division manager of the debtor, or any consultant providing services to the debtor made in anticipation of bankruptcy; or

''(ii) in anticipation of bankruptcy to a consultant who is formerly an insider and who is retained to provide services to an entity that becomes a debtor (including an obligation under a contract to provide services to such entity or to a debtor); and

''(B) made or incurred on or within 1 year before the filing of the petition.

''(2) No provision of subsection (c) shall constitute a defense against the recovery of a transfer described in paragraph (1).

''(3) The trustee or a committee appointed pursuant to section 1102 may commence an action to recover a transfer described in paragraph (1), except that, if neither the trustee nor such committee commences an action to recover the transfer by the time of the commencement of a hearing on the confirmation of a plan under section 1129, any party in interest may apply to the court for authority to recover the claims for the benefit of the estate. The costs of recovery shall be borne by the estate.''.

TITLE IV—OTHER PROVISIONS

SEC. 401. UNION PROOF OF CLAIM.

Section 501(a) of title 11, United States Code, is amended by inserting '', including a labor organization,'' after ''A creditor''.

SEC. 402. EXCEPTION FROM AUTOMATIC STAY.

Section 362(b) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (28), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (29), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (29) the following:

''(30) of the commencement or continuation of a grievance, arbitration, or similar dispute resolution proceeding established by a collective bargaining agreement that was or could have been commenced against the debtor before the filing of a case under this title, or the payment or enforcement of an award or settlement under such proceeding.''.

SEC. 403. EFFECT ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS UNDER THE RAILWAY LABOR ACT.

Section 103 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(m) Notwithstanding sections 365, 1113, or 1114, neither the court nor the trustee may change the wages, working conditions, or retirement benefits of an employee or a retiree of the debtor established by a collective bargaining agreement that is subject to the Railway Labor Act (45 U.S.C. 151 et seq.), except in accordance with section 6 of that Act (45 U.S.C. 156).''.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 922—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 2024 AS ''NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH'' AND COMMENDING THE COOPERATIVE BUSINESS MODEL AND THE MEMBER-OWNERS, BUSINESSES, EMPLOYEES, FARMERS, RANCHERS, AND PRACTITIONERS WHO USE THE COOPERATIVE BUSINESS MODEL TO POSITIVELY IMPACT THE ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Ms. SMITH submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 922

Whereas a cooperative—

(1) is a business that is owned and governed by its members, who are the individuals who use the business, create the products of the business, or manage the operation of the business; and

(2) operates under the 7 principles of—

(A) voluntary open membership;

(B) democratic control;

(C) owner economic participation;

(D) autonomy and independence;

(E) education, training, and information;

(F) cooperation among cooperatives; and

(G) concern for community;

Whereas cooperative entrepreneurs can be found in almost every economic sector in the United States, throughout all 50 States and the territories of the United States, and in every congressional district in the United States;

Whereas cooperatives help farmers increase incomes and become more resilient to economic business cycles by working together to plan and prepare for the future, while contributing significantly to the economic activity in the agriculture and food markets of the United States;

Whereas the roughly 1,700 agricultural cooperatives in the United States operate more than 9,500 facilities, employ a record $111,000,000,000 in assets, and generate more than $231,400,000,000 in business;

Whereas the majority of the 2,000,000 farmers in the United States belong to an agricultural cooperative;

Whereas agricultural cooperatives offer members the opportunity to access commodity value-added profits throughout the handling, processing, and distribution chains;

Whereas member-owners in agricultural cooperatives are dedicated to providing the highest quality product for consumers;

Whereas agricultural cooperatives add significant benefits to the economic well-being of rural areas of the United States by providing more than 250,000 jobs with annual wages totaling more than $11,000,000,000;

Whereas agricultural cooperatives provide resources to their member-owners, such as low-cost supplies, effective marketing, and services;

Whereas farmer members in agricultural cooperatives have the opportunity to pool resources and reinvest profits into the communities of the farmer members;

Whereas the principles of cooperation and the cooperative business model help smallholder farmers organize themselves and gain access to local and global markets, training, improved inputs, conservation programs, and aggregated sales and marketing;

Whereas the cooperative business model provides farmers ownership over their economic decisions, a focus on learning, and a broader understanding of environmental and social concerns;

Whereas the cooperative business model has been used throughout the history of the United States to advance civil rights and to help ensure that all people have equal access to economic opportunity;

Whereas cooperative values promote self-determination and democratic rights for all people;

Whereas the comprehensive global food security strategy established under section 5 of the Global Food Security Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9304) (commonly known as ''Feed the Future'') and the Cooperative Development Program of the United States Agency for International Development use cooperative principles and the cooperative business model to advance international development, nutrition, resilience, and economic security;

Whereas the Interagency Working Group on Cooperative Development—

(1) is an interagency group that is coordinated and chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture to foster cooperative development and ensure coordination with Federal agencies and national and local cooperative organizations that have cooperative programs and interests; and

(2) as of the date of introduction of this resolution, has organized 11 meetings;

Whereas the bipartisan Congressional Cooperative Business Caucus unites Members of Congress to—

(1) create a better-informed electorate and a more educated public on the important role that cooperatives play in the economy of the United States and the world;

(2) promote the cooperative business model because that model ensures that consumers have access to high-quality goods and services at competitive prices and costs that improve the lives of individuals, families, and their communities; and

(3) address and correct awareness challenges among the public and within the Federal Government relating to what cooperatives look like, who participates in cooperatives, where cooperatives are located, and why individuals choose cooperatives;

Whereas the Bureau of the Census, as part of the 2017 and 2022 Economic Censuses, asked each business if the business was organized as a cooperative, and the responses of businesses yielded both quantitative and qualitative data on the effects and importance of cooperatives across the economy of the United States;

Whereas, throughout the rural United States, many utility service providers operate as cooperatives and are tasked with the delivery of public services, such as electricity, water, telecommunications, and broadband, in areas where investor-owned utility companies typically do not operate;

Whereas utility cooperatives have innovated to meet the evolving needs of their member-owners, create more resilient communities, and help rural individuals in the United States prosper;

Whereas electric cooperatives serve 56 percent of the landmass of the United States, including 92 percent of persistent poverty counties, and energy cooperatives power more than 21,500,000 homes, businesses, and schools;

Whereas there are approximately 260 telephone cooperatives in the United States with total annual revenues of $3,900,000,000;

Whereas, in the financial services sector, cooperatives, including credit unions, farm credit banks, and other financing organizations that lend to cooperatives, provide numerous benefits to the member-owners of those cooperatives;

Whereas, nationally, approximately 4,800 credit unions serve 138,000,000 members;

Whereas member-owners of cooperatives vote in board elections, and earned profits cycle back into cost-saving programs or return as dividend payments;

Whereas purchasing and shared service cooperatives allow independent and franchise businesses to thrive;

Whereas food cooperatives range in size from small, local institutions to multi-store regional giants that compete with chain stores with locations across the United States;

Whereas food cooperatives support local producers in all 50 States and reduce food insecurity;

Whereas, in the housing sector, housing cooperatives and resident-owned communities in which members own the building or land—

(1) are an alternative to conventional rental apartments, manufactured home parks, and condominiums; and

(2) empower each resident with ownership and responsibility;

Whereas housing cooperatives have roots dating to the late 1800s and are increasingly becoming a housing alternative for students at colleges throughout the United States;

Whereas shared equity housing cooperatives are a strategy for preserving long-term, affordable housing;

Whereas cooperatives allow residents of manufactured home communities to collectively purchase the land on which they live, providing stability and the opportunity to self-govern;

Whereas, as of 2023, 309 manufactured home communities are cooperatively owned;

Whereas the growth of worker cooperatives in the United States is allowing more workers to own and have greater control over their businesses;

Whereas many small businesses convert to cooperatives when faced with closure or a buyout, ensuring that such a business can continue to serve its community; and

Whereas the cooperative business model allows business owners to retire and transfer business ownership to employees or consumers, protecting local ownership and supporting local communities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses support for the designation of October 2024 as ''National Co-Op Month'';

(2) commends the cooperative business model for—

(A) its contributions to the economy of the United States;

(B) the jobs it creates; and

(C) its positive impacts on local communities;

(3) expresses confidence in, and support for, cooperatives to continue their successes; and

(4) will be mindful in crafting legislation that affects business models that are not the cooperative business model so that the legislation does not adversely affect the cooperative business model.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3312. Mr. WYDEN proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 74, condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

SA 3313. Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for Mrs. BLACKBURN) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 4212, to amend the Visit America Act to promote music tourism, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3312. Mr. WYDEN proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 74, condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights; as follows:

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas, in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, and 2022, Congress declared that it deplored the religious persecution by the Government of Iran of the Baha'i community and would hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian nationals, including members of the Baha'i faith;

Whereas, since 1979, Iranian authorities have killed or executed more than 200 Baha'i leaders and more than 10,000 Baha'is have been dismissed from government and university jobs;

Whereas June 18, 2023, marked the 40th anniversary of the execution of 10 Baha'i women by the Government of Iran, each witnessing the hanging of those hanged before her in a final failed attempt to induce abandonment of their faith after over 6 months of imprisonment and violent abuse, with the youngest only 17 years old;

Whereas, on December 19, 2023, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/C.3/78/L.41) calling on Iran to carry out wide-ranging reforms and expressing serious concerns for its escalating human rights abuses, including—

(1) ''severe limitations and increasing restrictions on the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or belief'';

(2) ''restrictions on the establishment of places of worship, undue restrictions on burials carried out in accordance with religious tenets, attacks against places of worship and burial'';

(3) ''increased harassment, intimidation, persecution, arbitrary arrest, and detention of, and incitement to hatred that leads to violence against, persons belonging to recognized and unrecognized religious minorities, including Christians (particularly converts from Islam), Gonabadi Dervishes, Jews, Sufi Muslims, Sunni Muslims, Yarsanis, Zoroastrians, and in particular, Baha'is'';

(4) ''denial of and restrictions on access to education, including for members of the Baha'i faith''; and

(5) ''particular'' persecution of members of the Baha'i community ''who have been subjected to a continued increase in persecution, including attacks, harassment and targeting. . .on account of their faith and have been reportedly subjected to mass arrests and lengthy prison sentences, as well as the arrest of prominent members and increased confiscation and destruction of property'';

Whereas, in the 2024 Annual Report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom issued in May 2024, it is reported that in 2023—

(1) the Government of Iran ''conducted individual and mass arrests of Baha'is across Iran taking them to undisclosed locations and imposing excessively long prison sentences'';

(2) ''security officials beat and brutalized Baha'is during raids and searches of private homes'';

(3) ''security forces arrested scores of Baha'is in cities including Hamadan, Mehrshahr, Yazd, Karaj, Alborz, and Tehran'';

(4) the ''government has targeted Baha'i women in particular'' and that ''[a]pproximately two-thirds of Iranian Baha'i prisoners are women'';

(5) authorities ''targeted Baha'i cemeteries in Arak, Alborz, and Golestan''; and

(6) local ''municipalities seized and confiscated Baha'i land, restricted Baha'i access to burial grounds, and declared intentions to sell Baha'i-owned property exclusively to Muslims.'';

Whereas the Iran section of the Department of State's 2022 Report on International Religious Freedom issued in May 2023 provides, in part—

(1) ''[I]n July and August, security forces in cities across the country conducted multiple raids of Baha'i homes, confiscated property deemed 'illegitimate wealth', and arrested Baha'is in their homes or workplaces on unsubstantiated charges including 'causing intellectual and ideological insecurity in Muslim society.' '';

(2) ''Authorities reportedly continued to deny members of unrecognized religious minority groups access to education and government employment unless they declared themselves as belonging to one of the country's recognized religions on their application forms. UN experts reported universities rejected more than 90 Baha'i students between January and August.''; and

(3) ''Government officials and government-affiliated organizations continued to disseminate anti-Baha'i and antisemitic messages using traditional and social media.'';

Whereas, in response to a surge in persecution in June and July 2022, involving the subjection of over 100 Baha'is to arrests, arraignments, sentencing, and raids on their homes and businesses across Iran, including the sentencing in June of 26 individuals in the city of Shiraz to a combined total of 85 years in prison, the Department of State's Office of International Religious Freedom issued a statement on August 2, 2022, indicating that ''[a]mid a continued rise in arrests, sentences, and imprisonments, the U.S. urges Iran to halt its ongoing oppression of the Baha'i community and honor its international obligations to respect the right of all Iranians to freedom of religion or belief'';

Whereas, on November 21, 2022, Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi, 2 former members of the informal 7-person leadership group of the Baha'is of Iran, who each served 10-year sentences from 2008 to 2018, and have been detained since July 31, 2022, in Evin prison, were sentenced to 10 years in prison each after a summary trial lasting 1 hour;

Whereas, on December 11, 2022, the Baha'i International Community organization stated that ''Dr. Shirin Ebadi, the Nobel laureate and defence lawyer for Mahvash and Fariba during their first trial, said in 2008 that 'not a shred of evidence' was offered to prove the national security charges or other allegations. Nor was any new evidence forthcoming at this latest trial'';

Whereas, on January 12, 2024, the Baha'i International Community organization reported increasing incidents of persecution accompanied by intensified violence perpetrated against the Baha'i community by the Government of Iran, for example—

(1) ''since the beginning of October [2023] more than 200 incidents of persecution, including over 50 arrests and imprisonments, have occurred in various cities such as Shiraz, Yazd, Isfahan, Hamadan, and Karaj'';

(2) government agents have perpetrated ''increasingly violent home raids, disproportionately affecting women and the elderly, and have even resulted in hospitalizations and traumatic separations of mothers from their children. Notably, over two-thirds of those arrested and detained have been women, predominantly in their twenties and thirties, highlighting the escalation of attacks against women in recent months.''; and

(3) government agents have instigated a ''conspicuous rise in hate speech, where Baha'is have been accused of being behind the September 2022 protests, promoting permissiveness, being against Islam and Shiism, being spies for Israel and the West, and being part of a political movement that seeks to undermine the state'';

Whereas Iran is a member of the United Nations and a signatory to both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, among other international human rights treaties, without reservation;

Whereas section 105 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8514) authorizes the President to impose sanctions on individuals who are ''responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against citizens of

Iran or their family members on or after June 12, 2009''; and

Whereas the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–158) amends and expands the authorities established under the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–195) to sanction Iranian human rights abusers: Now, therefore, be it

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SA 3313. Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for Mrs. BLACKBURN) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 4212, to amend the Visit America Act to promote music tourism, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 6, line 9, strike ''Section 600 of the Visit America Act'' and insert ''Section 600 of title VI of division BB of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I have five requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet in open executive session during the session of the Senate on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at 10 a.m., to consider a nomination.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHEMICAL SAFETY, WASTE MANAGEMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

The Subcommittee on Chemical Safety, Waste Management, Environmental Justice, and Regulatory Oversight of the Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Rebecca Schatz, a member of Senator BUTLER's staff, be granted floor privileges for the duration of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SECURE ADJACENT FEDERAL PROPERTY ACT OF 2023

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 185, S. 1868.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1868) to require an interagency study to produce a security assessment process on adjacent space to high-security leased space to accommodate a Federal agency, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Secure Adjacent Federal Property Act of 2023''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of General Services.

(2) BENEFICIAL OWNER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''beneficial owner'', with respect to a covered entity, means each natural person who, directly or indirectly, through any contract, arrangement, understanding, relationship, or otherwise—

(i) exercises substantial control over the covered entity; or

(ii) owns or controls not less than 25 percent of the ownership interests of, or receives substantial economic benefits from the assets of, the covered entity.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ''beneficial owner'', with respect to a covered entity, does not include—

(i) a minor;

(ii) a person acting as a nominee, intermediary, custodian, or agent on behalf of another person;

(iii) a person acting solely as an employee of the covered entity and whose control over or economic benefits from the covered entity derives solely from the employment status of the person;

(iv) a person whose only interest in the covered entity is through a right of inheritance, unless the person also meets the requirements of subparagraph (A); or

(v) a creditor of the covered entity, unless the creditor also meets the requirements of subparagraph (A).

(C) ANTI-ABUSE RULE.—The exclusions under subparagraph (B) shall not apply if, in the determination of the Administrator, an exclusion is used for the purpose of evading, circumventing, or abusing the requirements of this Act.

(3) CONTROL.—The term ''control'', with respect to a covered entity, means—

(A) having the authority or ability to determine how the covered entity is utilized; or

(B) having some decisionmaking power for the use of the covered entity.

(4) COVERED ENTITY.—The term ''covered entity'' means—

(A) a person, corporation, company, business association, partnership, society, trust, or any other nongovernmental entity, organization, or group; or

(B) any governmental entity or instrumentality of a government.

(5) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term ''Executive agency'' has the meaning given the term in section 105 of title 5, United States Code.

(6) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term ''Federal agency'' means—

(A) an Executive agency; and

(B) any establishment in the legislative or judicial branch of the Federal Government.

(7) FEDERAL LESSEE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''Federal lessee'' means—

(i) the Administrator;

(ii) the Architect of the Capitol; and

(iii) the head of any other Federal agency that has independent statutory leasing authority.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ''Federal lessee'' does not include—

(i) the head of an element of the intelligence community; or

(ii) the Secretary of Defense.

(8) FEDERAL TENANT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''Federal tenant'' means a Federal agency that is occupying or will occupy a high-security leased space for which a lease agreement has been secured on behalf of the Federal agency.

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term ''Federal tenant'' does not include an element of the intelligence community.

(9) FOREIGN ENTITY.—The term ''foreign entity'' means—

(A) a corporation, company, business association, partnership, society, trust, or any other nongovernmental entity, organization, or group that is headquartered in or organized under the laws of—

(i) a country that is not the United States; or

(ii) a State, unit of local government, or Indian Tribe that is not located within or a territory of the United States; or

(B) a government or governmental instrumentality that is not—

(i) the United States Government; or

(ii) a State, unit of local government, or Indian Tribe that is located within or a territory of the United States.

(10) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term ''foreign person'' means an individual who is not a United States person.

(11) HIGH-SECURITY LEASED ADJACENT SPACE.—The term ''high-security leased adjacent space'' means a building or office space that shares a boundary with or surrounds a high-security leased space.

(12) HIGH-SECURITY LEASED SPACE.—The term ''high-security leased space'' means a space leased by a Federal lessee that—

(A) will be occupied by Federal employees for nonmilitary activities; and

(B) has a facility security level of III, IV, or V, as determined by the Federal tenant in consultation with the Interagency Security Committee, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Administrator.

(13) HIGHEST-LEVEL OWNER.—The term ''highest-level owner'' means an entity that owns or controls—

(A) an immediate owner of the offeror of a lease for a high-security leased adjacent space; or

(B) 1 or more entities that control an immediate owner of the offeror of a lease described in subparagraph (A).

(14) IMMEDIATE OWNER.—The term ''immediate owner'' means an entity, other than the offeror of a lease for a high-security leased adjacent space, that has direct control of that offeror, including—

(A) ownership or interlocking management;

(B) identity of interests among family members;

(C) shared facilities and equipment; and

(D) the common use of employees.

(15) INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.—The term ''intelligence community'' has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003).

(16) SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS.—The term ''substantial economic benefits'', with respect to a natural person described in paragraph (2)(A)(ii), means having an entitlement to the funds or assets of a covered entity that, as a practical matter, enables the person, directly or indirectly, to control, manage, or direct the covered entity.

(17) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term ''United States person'' means an individual who—

(A) is a citizen of the United States; or

(B) is an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States.

SEC. 3. GOVERNMENT-WIDE STUD .

(a) COORDINATION STUDY.—The Administrator, in coordination with the Director of the Federal Protective Service, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and any other relevant entities, as determined by the Administrator, shall carry out a Government-wide study examining options to assist agencies (as defined in section 551 of title 5, United States Code) to produce a security assessment process for high-security leased adjacent space before entering into a lease or novation agreement with a covered entity for the purposes of accommodating a Federal tenant located in a high-security leased space.

(b) CONTENTS.—The study required under subsection (a)—

(1) shall evaluate how to produce a security assessment process that includes a process for assessing the threat level of each occupancy of a high-security leased adjacent space, including through—

(A) site-visits;

(B) interviews; and

(C) any other relevant activities determined necessary by the Director of the Federal Protective Service; and

(2) may include a process for collecting and using information on each immediate owner, highest-level owner, or beneficial owner of a covered entity that seeks to enter into a lease with a Federal lessee for a high-security leased adjacent space, including—

(A) name;

(B) current residential or business street address; and

(C) an identifying number or document that verifies identity as a United States person, a foreign person, or a foreign entity.

(c) WORKING GROUP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in coordination with the Director of Federal Protective Service, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and any other relevant entities, as determined by the Administrator, shall establish a working group to assist in the carrying out of the study required under subsection (a).

(2) NO COMPENSATION.—A member of the working group established under paragraph (1) shall receive no compensation as a result of serving on the working group.

(3) SUNSET.—The working group established under paragraph (1) shall terminate on the date on which the report required under subsection (f) is submitted.

(d) PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.—The Administrator shall ensure that any information collected pursuant to the study required under subsection (a) shall not be made available to the public.

(e) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section requires an entity located in the United States to provide information requested pursuant to the study required under subsection (a).

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in coordination with the Director of Federal Protective Service, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and any other relevant entities, as determined by the Administrator, shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report describing—

(1) the results of the study required under subsection (a); and

(2) how all applicable privacy laws and rights relating to the First and Fourth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States would be upheld and followed in—

(A) the security assessment process described in paragraph (1) of subsection (b); and

(B) the information collection process described in paragraph (2) of that subsection.

(g) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section authorizes a Federal entity to mandate information gathering unless specifically authorized by law.

(h) PROHIBITION.—No information collected pursuant the security assessment process described in subsection (b)(1) may be used for law enforcement purposes.

(i) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I further ask that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1868), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

AMERICAN MUSIC TOURISM ACT OF 2024

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 513, S. 4212.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 4212) to amend the Visit America Act to promote music tourism, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''American Music Tourism Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETAR OF COMMERCE FOR TRAVEL AND TOURISM.

(a) DOMESTIC TRAVEL AND TOURISM.—Section 605(b) of the Visit America Act (15 U.S.C. 9803(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) identify locations and events in the United States that are important to music tourism and facilitate and promote domestic travel and tourism to those locations and events.''.

(b) FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND LEISURE TRAVEL.—Section 605 of the Visit America Act (15 U.S.C. 9803) is amended by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

''(d) FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND LEISURE TRAVEL.—The Assistant Secretary, in coordination with relevant Federal agencies, shall strive to increase and facilitate international business and leisure travel to the United States and ensure competitiveness by—

''(1) facilitating large meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions in the United States;

''(2) emphasizing rural and other destinations in the United States that are rich in cultural heritage or ecological tourism, among other uniquely American destinations, as locations for hosting international meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions;

''(3) facilitating and promoting international travel and tourism to sports and recreation events and activities in the United States; and

''(4) identifying locations and events in the United States that are important to music tourism and facilitating and promoting international travel and tourism to those locations and events.''.

(c) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 605(f) of the Visit America Act (15 U.S.C. 9803(f)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) REPORT ON GOALS RELATING TO DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the American Music Tourism Act of 2024, and every 2 years thereafter, the Assistant Secretary shall submit to the Subcommittee on Tourism, Trade, and Export Promotion of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Subcommittee on Innovation, Data, and Commerce of the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report of activities, findings, achievements, and vulnerabilities relating to the goals described in subsections (a) through (d).''.

(d) DEFINITION.—Section 600 of the Visit America Act (15 U.S.C. 9801) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly; and

(2) by striking ''In this title, the term 'COVID-19 public health emergency'—'' and inserting the following:

''In this title:

''(1) COVID-19 public health emergency.—The term 'COVID-19 public health emergency'—''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) MUSIC TOURISM.—The term 'music tourism' means—

''(A) the act of traveling to a State or locality to visit historic or modern day music-related attractions, including museums, studios, venues of all sizes, and other sites related to music; or

''(B) the act of traveling to a State or locality to attend a music festival, a concert, or other live musical performance or music-related special event.''.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Blackburn amendment to the committee-reported substitute amendment, which is at the desk, be considered and agreed to; that the committee-reported substitute amendment, as amended, be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3313) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To provide a technical correction)

On page 6, line 9, strike ''Section 600 of the Visit America Act'' and insert ''Section 600 of title VI of division BB of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023''.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 4212), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 4212

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''American Music Tourism Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR TRAVEL AND TOURISM.

(a) DOMESTIC TRAVEL AND TOURISM.—Section 605(b) of the Visit America Act (15 U.S.C. 9803(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) identify locations and events in the United States that are important to music tourism and facilitate and promote domestic travel and tourism to those locations and events.''.

(b) FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND LEISURE TRAVEL.—Section 605 of the Visit America Act (15 U.S.C. 9803) is amended by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

''(d) FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND LEISURE TRAVEL.—The Assistant Secretary, in coordination with relevant Federal agencies, shall strive to increase and facilitate international business and leisure travel to the United States and ensure competitiveness by—

''(1) facilitating large meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions in the United States;

''(2) emphasizing rural and other destinations in the United States that are rich in cultural heritage or ecological tourism, among other uniquely American destinations, as locations for hosting international meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions;

''(3) facilitating and promoting international travel and tourism to sports and recreation events and activities in the United States; and

''(4) identifying locations and events in the United States that are important to music tourism and facilitating and promoting international travel and tourism to those locations and events.''.

(c) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 605(f) of the Visit America Act (15 U.S.C. 9803(f)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) REPORT ON GOALS RELATING TO DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the American Music Tourism Act of 2024, and every 2 years thereafter, the Assistant Secretary shall submit to the Subcommittee on Tourism, Trade, and Export Promotion of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Subcommittee on Innovation, Data, and Commerce of the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report of activities, findings, achievements, and vulnerabilities relating to the goals described in subsections (a) through (d).''.

(d) DEFINITION.—Section 600 of title VI of division BB of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (15 U.S.C. 9801) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly; and

(2) by striking ''In this title, the term 'COVID-19 public health emergency'—'' and inserting the following:

''In this title:

''(1) COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.—The term 'COVID-19 public health emergency'—''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) MUSIC TOURISM.—The term 'music tourism' means—

''(A) the act of traveling to a State or locality to visit historic or modern day music-related attractions, including museums, studios, venues of all sizes, and other sites related to music; or

''(B) the act of traveling to a State or locality to attend a music festival, a concert, or other live musical performance or music-related special event.''.

NATIONAL EARTHQUAKE HAZARDS REDUCTION PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2024

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 523, S. 3606.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3606) to reauthorize the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Reauthorization Act of 2024''.

SEC. 2. MODIFICATION OF FINDINGS.

Section 2 of the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7701) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ''50 States, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,'' and inserting ''States and Tribal jurisdictions'';

(B) by striking ''of them'' and inserting ''States''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following: ''Almost half of the United States population resides in areas that are at risk or experiencing a damaging earthquake during the 50-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Reauthorization Act of 2024'';

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by inserting after the first sentence the following: ''A 2023 report by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the United States Geological Survey (FEMA P-366) estimates the annualized earthquake losses to the national building stock is $14,700,000,000 per year and the total economic exposure to earthquake losses (buildings and contents) across the nation is $107,800,000,000,000.''; and

(B) in the third sentence—

(i) by striking ''and construction'' and inserting '', construction, evaluation, and retrofitting'';

(ii) by striking ''and (E)'' and inserting the following: ''(E) inventories of buildings and infrastructure with high seismic risk, especially those that are critical to community resilience, (F) programs that require or incentivize replacement or retrofit of existing buildings and infrastructure with high seismic risk, especially those that are critical to community resilience, and (G)'';

(3) in paragraph (3), by inserting ''Tribal,'' after ''local,'';

(4) in paragraph (4), by striking ''could provide'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting ''is necessary to provide the scientific understanding needed to improve and expand the earthquake early warning system.'';

(5) in paragraph (8), by striking ''cave-ins'' and inserting ''collapse'';

(6) in paragraph (9)—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking ''and local'' and inserting ''local, and Tribal government''; and

(B) in the second sentence, by striking ''transfer knowledge and information to'' and inserting ''exchange knowledge and information between''; and

(C) in the third sentence, by striking ''specifications, criteria'' and inserting ''guidelines, codes, standards'';

(7) in paragraph (12)—

(A) in the second sentence—

(i) by striking ''When earthquakes occur, the built environment is generally'' and inserting ''Relatively newer buildings and infrastructure have generally been'';

(ii) by striking ''and is'' and inserting ''when earthquakes occur, but most are''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following: ''In addition, buildings and infrastructure built to older codes and standards may pose significant risk of injury, loss of life, or irreparable damage. A 2021 report submitted to Congress pursuant to section 8(b), as amended by section 5 of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–307), by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (FEMA P2090/NST SP-1254) provides recommendations for improving post-earthquake functional recovery time of the built environment to support community resilience goals and many of these recommendations still need to be implemented.''; and

(8) in paragraph (13)—

(A) in the first sentence, by inserting ''in 2011'' after ''a study'';

(B) in the second sentence, by inserting ''(in 2011 dollars)'' after ''$300,000,000''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following: ''The cost of actual seismic retrofits to reduce known risks is not included in such valuation.''.

SEC. 3. MODIFICATION OF PURPOSE.

Section 3 of the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7702) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ''and local'' and inserting '', local, and Tribal government''; and

(B) by striking ''locations and structures'' and inserting ''buildings and infrastructure'';

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking ''and construction'' and inserting '', construction, evaluation, and retrofitting''; and

(B) by inserting ''housing and care facilities for vulnerable populations,'' after ''occupancy buildings''; and

(3) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking ''and local'' and inserting '', local, and Tribal government''; and

(B) by striking ''encourage consideration of'' and inserting ''incorporate''.

SEC. 4. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITIONS.

Section 4 of the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7703) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by inserting '', including secondary effects such as earthquake-caused tsunamis''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(11) The term 'Tribal government' has the meaning given the term 'tribal government' in section in section 421 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 658).

''(12) The term 'functional recovery' means a post-earthquake performance state in which a building or lifeline infrastructure system is maintained, or restored, to safely and adequately support the basic intended functions associated with the pre-earthquake use or occupancy of a building, or the pre-earthquake service level of a lifeline infrastructure system.

''(13) The term 'earthquake forecast' means a statement of probabilities that 1 or more earthquakes within a clearly specified magnitude range may occur within a specified time interval and geographic region.''.

SEC. 5. IMPROVEMENTS TO NATIONAL EARTHQUAKE HAZARDS REDUCTION PROGRAM.

(a) PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.—Subsection (a)(2) of section 5 of the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7704) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in the matter before clause (i)—

(i) by striking ''and local'' and inserting '', local, and Tribal''; and

(ii) by striking ''and constructing'' and inserting '', designing, constructing, evaluating, and retrofitting'';

(B) by amending clause (ii) to read as follows:

''(ii) development of standards, guidelines, and voluntary standards, guidelines, and consensus codes for earthquake hazards reduction for buildings, structures, and lifeline infrastructure, including post-earthquake recovery-based performance objectives that address reoccupancy and downtime of community-prioritized buildings, structures, and services provided by lifeline infrastructure;'';

(C) in clause (iii), by striking ''and hazards reduction; and'' and inserting ''functional recovery, and other hazards reduction topics;'';

(D) in clause (iv)—

(i) by inserting ''and maintaining'' after ''publishing'';

(ii) by inserting ''in coordination with the National Tsunami Hazards Mitigation Program, tsunami susceptibility,'' after ''liquefaction susceptibility,''; and

(iii) by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon; and

(E) by adding at the end the following:

''(v) subject to the availability of funds, development of best practices and guidelines to create an inventory of and conduct seismic performance evaluations of buildings, structures, and lifeline infrastructure with high seismic risk, especially those that are critical to community resilience; and

''(vi) subject to the availability of funds, the provision of technical assistance upon request by a State, local, or Tribal government regarding—

''(I) the creation of an inventory of buildings, structures, and lifeline infrastructure;

''(II) the performance of seismic performance evaluations; and

''(III) cost-effective best practices for retrofitting existing buildings, structures, and lifeline infrastructure.'';

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(3) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (E); and

(4) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

''(D) improve the understanding of—

''(i) the multiple hazards associated with earthquakes, including liquefaction, tsunamis, landslides, structural fires, and the compounding effects of climate on these hazards; and

''(ii) potential mitigation measures for such hazards; and''.

(b) DUTIES OF INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON EARTHQUAKE HAZARDS REDUCTION.—Subsection (a)(3)(D)(ii) of such section is amended—

(1) in subclause (V), by inserting ''and associated secondary hazards'' before the period at the end; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(VIII) Coordinating with the Chair of the Federal Communications Commission on the timely broadcasting of emergency alerts generated by the earthquake early warning system.''.

(c) BIENNIAL REPORT.—Subsection (a)(4)(A) of such section is amended by striking ''under paragraph (3)(D)(i)(I)'' each place it appears and inserting ''under paragraph (3)(D)(ii)(I)''.

(d) ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—Subsection (a)(5)(A) of such section is amended—

(1) by inserting ''the Chair of the Scientific Earthquake Studies Advisory Committee and'' after ''including'';

(2) by striking ''and local government'' and inserting '', local, and Tribal governments''; and

(3) by inserting ''social,'' after ''scientific,''.

(e) LEAD AGENCY FOR RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROGRAM AGENCIES.—Subsection (b)(1) of such section is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking ''and local'' and inserting ''local, and Tribal governments''; and

(B) by striking ''plan and constructing'' and inserting ''planning, designing, constructing, evaluating, and retrofitting'';

(2) by redesignating subparagraphs (C) and (D) as subparagraphs (F) and (G), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

''(C) improve the understanding of earthquake-caused fires and support the development of engineering tools and construction methods that mitigate the risk of fire following earthquakes;

''(D) develop, in coordination with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, best practices and guidelines for a State, local, or Tribal government to create an inventory of buildings, structures, or lifeline infrastructure that are critical to community resilience or otherwise have high seismic risk;

''(E) provide, in coordination with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, technical assistance to a State, local, or Tribal government requesting such assistance with respect to the creation of an inventory of buildings, structures, or lifeline infrastructure;''.

(f) RESPONSIBILITIES OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY.—Subsection (b)(2) of such section is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) in clause (i)—

(i) by inserting ''and Tribal governments'' after ''States'';

(ii) by inserting ''and performance evaluations'' after ''safety inspections''; and

(iii) by inserting ''and improve post-earthquake functional recovery'' after ''seismic safety'';

(B) in clause (ii), by inserting '', including Tribal entities,'' after ''appropriate audiences'';

(C) in clause (iii)—

(i) by striking ''of seismic resistant'' and inserting ''to all appropriate audiences, including Tribal governments, of''; and

(ii) by inserting ''that enhance seismic safety, improve post-earthquake functional recovery, and reduce losses from earthquakes'' after ''and lifeline infrastructure'';

(D) in clause (iv)—

(i) in striking ''and local'' and inserting '', local, and Tribal''; and

(ii) by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(E) by redesignating clause (v) as clause (vi); and

(F) by inserting after clause (iv) the following:

''(v) shall provide technical assistance to State, local, or Tribal governmental entities in the creation of evacuation plans in the event of an earthquake, landslide, tsunami, or other earthquake-related hazard; and''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in the subparagraph heading, by inserting ''AND TRIBAL'' after ''STATE'';

(B) in the matter before clause (i), by inserting ''or Tribal government'' after ''State''; and

(C) in clause (i), by striking ''safety'' and inserting ''performance, community resilience, or public awareness''.

(g) RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.—Subsection (b)(3) of such section is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and local'' and inserting '', local, and Tribal'';

(2) in subparagraph (C), by inserting '', the Chair of the Federal Communications Commission,'' after ''Agency'';

(3) by redesignating subparagraphs (D) through (K) as subparagraphs (L) through (Q), respectively;

(4) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

''(D) coordinate with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency on data sharing and resource allocation to support a timely response to oceanic earthquakes and tsunamis;

''(E) in consultation with the Chair of the Federal Communications Commission, ensure that earthquake alerts and early warnings are broadcast as rapidly and reliably as possible, in the predominant languages in the affected region, to ensure maximum warning time for nearby persons;

''(F) expand the earthquake early warning system within and to additional high risk hazard areas, including making improvements as practicable to improve detection and increase the time between warning messages and perceptible ground motion;

''(G) coordinating with affected State and Tribal governments on earthquake early warning system improvements;

''(H) issue earthquake forecasts, when appropriate, for aftershocks associated with significant earthquakes in the United States;'';

(5) in subparagraph (I), as redesignated by paragraph (3), by inserting ''the Chair of the Federal Communications Commission,'' after ''Agency,'';

(6) in subparagraph (L), as redesignated by paragraph (3), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(7) in subparagraph (M), as redesignated by paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(8) in subparagraph (O), as redesignated by paragraph (3), by inserting ''maps of natural hazards associated with earthquakes and''.

(h) RESPONSIBILITIES OF NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION.—Subsection (b)(4)(A) of such section is amended—

(1) in clause (iii), by inserting ''including updated tsunami and liquefaction risk maps,''; and

(2) in clause (vii), by striking ''Historically Black Colleges and Universities and those serving large proportions of Hispanics, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, and other underrepresented populations'' and inserting ''institutions described in section 371(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a))''.

SEC. 6. SEISMIC PERFORMANCE PROPERT STANDARDS.

Section 947 of the Cranston-Gonzales National Affordable Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 7704a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''safety'' both places it appears and inserting ''performance''; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''shake-related property damage'' and inserting ''seismic-related property damage to improve the post-earthquake functional recovery time''.

SEC. 7. SEISMIC STANDARDS.

Section 8 of the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7705b) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking ''under paragraph (1)'' and inserting ''under subsection (a)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS.—Each Program agency, as part of their Program responsibilities, shall execute research, projects, grants, and other activities that support, promote, advance, or otherwise implement the recommendations in the report submitted pursuant to subsection (b) to improve the performance of the built environment in terms of post-earthquake reoccupancy and functional recovery time.

''(d) BIENNIAL REPORTS.—

''(1) BIENNIAL REPORTS TO INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE.—No later than September 30, 2025, and not less frequently than once every 2 years thereafter, each Program agency shall submit to the Interagency Coordinating Committee a report on activities and progress made to support, promote, or advance the implementation of the recommendations included in the report submitted pursuant to subsection (b).

''(2) INCLUSION IN BIENNIAL REPORTS OF INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE.—The Interagency Coordinating Committee shall include the information received under paragraph (1) in each biennial report submitted under section 5(a)(4), including consideration of a prioritized work plan to coordinate activities among the Program agencies and the necessary Program budget to fully implement the recommendations described in paragraph (1).''.

SEC. 8. IMPROVEMENTS TO POST-EARTHQUAKE INVESTIGATIONS PROGRAM.

Section 11 of the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7705e) is amended, in the matter before paragraph (1)—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting ''domestic and international'' after ''investigate major''; and

(2) in the fifth sentence, by inserting ''Federal Emergency Management'' before ''Agency''.

SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORIZATION FOR PROGRAM.—Subsection (a)(8) of section 12 of the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7706) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking '', and'' and inserting a comma; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (J) the following:

''(K) $10,590,000 for fiscal year 2024,
''(L) $10,590,000 for fiscal year 2025,
''(M) $10,590,000 for fiscal year 2026,
''(N) $10,590,000 for fiscal year 2027, and
''(O) $10,590,000 for fiscal year 2028,''.

(b) UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.—Subsection (b)(2) of such section is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(K) $100,900,000 for fiscal year 2024, of which not less than $36,000,000 shall be made available for completion of the Advanced National Seismic System established under section 13;

''(L) $100,900,000 for fiscal year 2025, of which not less than $36,000,000 shall be made available for completion of the Advanced National Seismic System established under section 13;

''(M) $100,900,000 for fiscal year 2026, of which not less than $36,000,000 shall be made available for completion of the Advanced National Seismic System established under section 13;

''(N) $100,900,000 for fiscal year 2027, of which not less than $36,000,000 shall be made available for completion of the Advanced National Seismic System established under section 13; and

''(O) $100,900,000 for fiscal year 2028, of which not less than $36,000,000 shall be made available for completion of the Advanced National Seismic System established under section 13.''.

(c) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION.—Subsection (c)(2) of such section is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking '', and'' and inserting a comma;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by striking the period at the end and inserting a comma; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(K) $58,000,000 for fiscal year 2024,
''(L) $58,000,000 for fiscal year 2025,
''(M) $58,000,000 for fiscal year 2026,
''(N) $58,000,000 for fiscal year 2027, and
''(O) $58,000,000 for fiscal year 2028.''.

(d) NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY.—Subsection (d)(2) of such section is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking '', and'' and inserting a comma;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by striking the period at the end and inserting a comma; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (J) the following:

''(K) $5,900,000 for fiscal year 2024,
''(L) $5,900,000 for fiscal year 2025,
''(M) $5,900,000 for fiscal year 2026,
''(N) $5,900,000 for fiscal year 2027, and
''(O) $5,900,000 for fiscal year 2028,''.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 3606), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE GOALS OF STOMACH CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 908.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 908) expressing support for the goals of Stomach Cancer Awareness Month.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 908) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of November 21, 2024, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2024

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 3 p.m. on Monday, December 9; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Johnson nomination; further, that at 5:30 p.m., the Senate vote on confirmation of the Johnson nomination as under the order of December 4; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Monday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2024 AT 3 P.M.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 4:37 p.m., adjourned until Monday, December 9, 2024, at 3 p.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate December 5, 2024:

THE JUDICIARY

SARAH MORGAN DAVENPORT, OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF KELLY McCLEARY

HON. BILL FOSTER
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and extraordinary contributions of Kelly McCleary, a beloved educator, community advocate, and mentor from Aurora, Illinois, who recently passed away. Kelly's unwavering dedication to her family, students, and community has left a lasting impact that will be felt for generations.

Born on December 30, 1961, in Augusta, Georgia, Kelly graduated from East Aurora High School in 1980. She earned a bachelor's degree in physical education from North Central College in 1985 and a master's degree in educational leadership from Aurora University. Kelly married Scott McCleary on September 5, 1987, and they had two children, Ian and Kara. She built a life centered on service, education, and community betterment.

Kelly's career in education was marked by a deep commitment to nurturing the growth and development of young people. She taught elementary physical education, coached track, and served as an assistant principal and principal in the East Aurora School District. In recognition of her exceptional leadership and dedication, she was named the Kane County School Administrator of the Year in 2006. Later, Kelly continued her work in education as a teacher and director of Wesley Preschool in Aurora, where she continued to inspire and shape the lives of young learners.

Outside of the classroom, Kelly's influence extended into the wider community through her service in both the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, serving as a den, pack, and troop leader, and leading numerous district and council activities. Her contributions were recognized with awards, including the Girl Scout Gold Award, the Thank Badge II, and the Hall of Fame Award. From the Boy Scouts, she was awarded the District Award of Merit and the Silver Beaver Award—both testaments to her dedication and leadership.

Kelly's commitment to her community was further exemplified through her involvement in organizations, including the Aurora Public Library District Foundation's annual gala. She was a champion for causes that enriched the lives of those around her, particularly children.

In her personal time, Kelly enjoyed traveling with her friends and family, especially to Disney World, and creating beautiful quilts. Her love for these activities was only surpassed by her passion for enriching the lives of others.

Kelly McCleary touched the lives of countless individuals throughout her life, leaving behind a legacy of compassion, leadership, and service. She was a tireless advocate for children, a devoted educator, a loving mother, and a cherished member of the Aurora community. She will be remembered fondly for her remarkable ability to inspire, her selfless contributions, and the profound impact she had on the lives of so many.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent Aurora and grateful for Kelly McCleary's service to her community. Her legacy of kindness, service, and dedication will live on in the hearts of those who knew her. I extend my heartfelt condolences to her family and invite my colleagues to join me in celebrating her extraordinary life.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MINNESOTA STATE REPRESENTATIVE GENE PELOWSKI

HON. BRAD FINSTAD
OF MINNESOTA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Minnesota House Representative Gene Pelowski. First elected in 1986 to represent then-District 34B, Representative Pelowski has served the people of southeastern Minnesota honorably for the past thirty-eight years, making him the longest-serving member of the Minnesota State House.

Most recently serving District 26A, Representative Pelowski has worked tirelessly on behalf of his constituents in Houston and Winona counties for nearly four decades.

During his time in office, higher education was a top priority for Representative Pelowski, championing a number of pieces of legislation for the expansion of Winona State University.

Representative Pelowski has done an exemplary job representing the people of 26A, and it was a true honor to have previously served alongside him in the Minnesota State Legislature.

I am grateful for Representative Pelowski's years of dedicated public service, and I wish him the warmest congratulations on his retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIMMY GOMEZ
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, on December 4, 2024, I was not recorded on Roll Call Nos. 480, 481, 482, and 483. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on Roll Call No. 480 and Roll Call No. 481 and voted "NAY" on Roll Call No. 482 and Roll Call No. 483.

CONGRATULATING RONALD PEEBLES

HON. JERRY L. CARL
OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. CARL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Ronald Peebles for receiving the 2024 Fire Chief of the Year Award. Ronald has served as Fire Chief since 2013 and continues to serve in this role. While Ronald has worked with the Atmore Fire Department, he has led efforts to acquire a new radio system to enhance public communications, collaborated with city leaders to purchase 4 new cab pumpers, and promoted fire safety education for elementary students. His commitment to the Atmore community is admirable. I am honored to have such a courageous and selfless individual residing in our district. I am proud to congratulate Ronald on achieving this outstanding award.

RECOGNIZING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WOMEN VETERANS OF SOUTHWEST MISSOURI, AMERICAN LEGION POST 1214

HON. ERIC BURLISON
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate American Legion Post 1214 located in Springfield, Missouri, on the 10-year anniversary of the organization's charter for Women Veterans of Southwest Missouri.

The post has grown from 12 initial Legionnaires to 97 Legionnaires thanks to the outreach and recruitment skills of a number of women including Adjutant Shellie Jones, Treasurer Nancy Fazzino, past Commander Louise Hansen, current Commander Jennifer Tyes and a host of other dedicated women. Ninety percent of the post's membership are women who have active duty service in one of the Nation's four military branches, while ten percent are men who also have served our country and been honorably discharged.

The post works to foster community building, and to provide outreach and support for fellow veterans by supporting programs such as Quilts of Valor, Harmony House Domestic Violence Shelter, Honor Flight of the Ozarks, and the United Way of the Ozarks' Veteran's Emergency Aid Program. The post also supports Junior ROTC programs at four area high schools: Willard, Hillcrest, Greenwood Laboratory and New Covenant Academy. The post also has sponsored some 56 candidates for Boys State and Girls State over the last 10 years. It also engages with the public and several local veterans organizations for Wreaths Across America, where they place holiday wreaths at each of the headstones in the national and state cemeteries in Springfield.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.
Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

These are just a few of their many service projects.

American Legion Post 1214 is an asset to Southwest Missouri, and I am grateful for their selfless service and tireless dedication to improving the lives of veterans of every era, as well as inspiring the next generation of military service members. Please join me in congratulating them for their 10 years of service.

HONORING FREDDIE JOHNSON

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a special man, Freddie Johnson, from Frankfort, Kentucky. Mr. Johnson is well-known in the bourbon industry for his service as Distillery VIP Visitor Lead for Buffalo Trace Distillery.

Mr. Johnson was born in Bourbon County and his family moved to Frankfort when he was 5 years old. His grandfather, Jimmy Johnson, Sr., began working at Buffalo Trace in 1912. He was there for 52 years and became the first African American warehouse foreman. His father, Jimmy Johnson, Jr., joined him at Buffalo Trace in 1936 and served as warehouse supervisor. Young Freddie played at Buffalo Trace as a child. In 2002, Johnson retired early from a job in Atlanta to return home, work with his father, and become the third generation of his family to work at Buffalo Trace.

Mr. Johnson has become famous for providing entertaining and informative tours of Buffalo Trace to thousands of guests each year. For his contributions to the bourbon industry, he was inducted into the Bourbon Hall of Fame in 2018. He is a recipient of the 2015 ROSE (Recognition of Service Excellence) award and the 2017 Lexington Hospitality Award. In 2024, he was chosen to be part of the Whisky Magazine Hall of Fame, becoming their first Black member. The Kentucky Black Bourbon Guild has a scholarship named in his honor.

Mr. Johnson has contributed greatly to the success of the bourbon industry, one of Kentucky's signature industries. It is my honor to lift up the life of this true Kentucky treasure, Mr. Freddie Johnson, and celebrate his iconic career at Buffalo Trace.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE HONORABLE GERALD E. LOEHR

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of the Honorable Gerald E. Loehr, a public servant who served with distinction and dedicated his life to the pursuit of justice.

Hon. Gerald E. Loehr was born into a Yonkers family with a longstanding tradition of politics and public service on May 19, 1943. His great-grandfather, John J. Loehr, served as a Yonkers Alderman (Councilman); his grandfather, Joseph F. Loehr, was the Mayor of Yonkers from 1932 to 1939; his mother, Gertrude Sweetman, was a civil servant; and his father, John F. Loehr, was an attorney and an Administrative Law Judge. With passion and principle, he proudly followed the family tradition.

He graduated from Manhattan College in 1965 and Fordham Law School in 1969. He began his distinguished career as a New York City Assistant District Attorney under the legendary Frank Hogan from 1969 to 1973. He then moved into private practice at the firm of Nobile and Magarian from 1973 to 1975.

Returning to the public sector in Yonkers, Loehr served two terms as the Third Ward Councilman from 1975 to 1979 and one term as Mayor from 1979 to 1981. Upon leaving the Mayor's office, he returned to private practice as a founding partner of the law firm Ecker, Loehr, & Ecker, LLP, where he worked until 2004.

In 2005, he was elected as Judge in the Westchester County Court. In 2006, he was appointed as an Acting State Supreme Court Justice, and in 2012, he was elected to serve as a State Supreme Court Justice in the 9th Judicial District.

Loehr was a devoted husband and father, survived by his beloved wife, Susan Newman Loehr, also a public servant and retired Westchester County Commissioner of Jurors. He is also survived by his older brother, John Loehr, and six children from two marriages: Peter, Janine (Barbanell), Melissa, Jonathan (Newman), Cariana (Bulman), and Gerald E., II. He also leaves behind 15 grandchildren, who will miss him dearly.

Today, Yonkers, the State of New York and our Nation, have lost a dedicated protector of justice. It is my hope that his wife, children, and grandchildren can draw strength and comfort from his many contributions. I ask my colleagues to join me in paying homage to a lifetime of service and in remembering the Honorable Gerald E. Loehr.

RECOGNIZING THE 70TH BIRTHDAY OF GERALD MORRIS

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize the 70th birthday of Gerald Morris. Gerald was born to Emma Lois and Toby Lee Morris on December 4, 1954, in Anniston, Alabama. He is one of six children. He graduated from Saks High School in 1972.

On February 22, 1985, Gerald married Waltina Morris. They were blessed with five children and seven grandchildren.

Gerald was inspired by his uncle, Edgar Morris, who was a tailor. He had his shop in downtown Anniston. Gerald worked at a men's clothing store named Phil's Men's Store and began doing alterations for customers there. He attended trade school and opened his own shop in downtown Anniston named Morris Alterations in 1981. As life would have it, his son was able to open a men's clothing store right across the street from his own storefront. Two of Gerald's daughters work alongside him daily.

During the COVID–19 pandemic, Mr. Morris switched gears at the shop and began making a variety of popular masks that sold from Alabama to Connecticut. After the pandemic, work was busier than ever as people went back to their social engagements, proms and weddings, they needed his artful craft to make their clothing perfect for them.

Gerald has been in business for almost 44 years and attributes his success to all of his hard work and loyal customers. He has no plans of retiring. Gerald and his store are a fixture of downtown Anniston and Gerald gives back to his community by helping local schools.

The Morris family attends New Jerusalem AFM Church of God.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Gerald on this milestone and wishing him a very happy birthday.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MINNESOTA STATE REPRESENTATIVE PAT GAROFALO

HON. BRAD FINSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Minnesota House Representative Pat Garofalo. First elected in 2004, Representative Garofalo has honorably served in the Minnesota Legislature for the past twenty years.

During his time in office, Representative Garofalo exhibited a profound willingness to serve his fellow southern Minnesotans, not only as their voice in the House Chamber, but also by his leadership on numerous House committees throughout the years. In 2008, Representative Garofalo was elected to the position of assistant majority whip for the legislative session, and later became chairman of the Education Finance Committee, as well as the Job Growth & Energy Affordability Committee.

Representative Garofalo has done an exemplary job representing his constituents in Dakota, Goodhue, and Rice counties for the past two decades, and I consider it a true honor to have previously served alongside him in the Minnesota State Legislature.

I am grateful for Representative Garofalo's years of dedicated public service to southern Minnesota, and I wish him the warmest congratulations on his retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF GENE R. MOFFITT

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to announce the passing of Gene R. Moffitt. Gene was an individual full of ambition, compassion and dedication towards his community. I urge us all to celebrate and remember the life of this incredible community leader, husband, friend, father, and grandfather.

Born in Independence, Missouri on August 6, 1941, Gene attended William Chrisman High School before heading to Central Missouri State University to continue his academic journey. Eventually, he began what

would become a stellar career spanning across four decades at Block & Company, Inc. Realtors. Starting at an entry level position as a Sales Associate in 1974, Gene was active in sales, leasing and development projects. Through the years, his expertise in the industry grew as he oversaw the completion of various projects in retail, office, commercial, and investment projects.

As he continued to work his way up the ladder at Block & Company, Inc. Realtors, Gene brought along his enthusiasm, knowledge and work ethic to create new approaches to real estate. Most notable, Gene became a leader in the industry when he initiated the first new life-style center in the region, Zona Rosa, a mixed-use retail, office, and industrial complex in the Greater Kansas City area. His experience was sought after and highly regarded among those in the industry.

Among his many achievements, Gene played an important role in relocating the St. Joseph Hospital, which later became the Linwood Shopping Center, revitalizing an inner-city area that was facing decline. The finished project became a new and expanded retail development which led to the City of Kansas City to be designated in 1986 as an ''All American City'' by the Citizens Forum on Self Government/National Municipal League and USA Today. Additionally, Gene worked as the Development Consultant for the Blue Parkway Town Center, a redevelopment project spearheaded by the Swope Parkway Health Center.

Though Gene has passed, his legacy and impact on Kansas City will remain long past our mortal lifetimes. I am reminded of Mark 10:45—''For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'' Gene's life was one dedicated to serving others and bettering the lives of countless people. Gene is survived by his loving family, friends, and wife of 58 years, Pamela. As we celebrate and remember the decades of devoted service from Gene, let us be inspired by his commitment to better his community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed a vote. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 480 and YEA on Roll Call No. 481.

RECOGNIZING STEVE YEAKEL

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Steve Yeakel, who is retiring as President and CEO of the Virginia Association of Community Banks (VACB) after 13 years of distinguished service to Virginia's community banking industry.

Throughout his tenure, Mr. Yeakel has been an unwavering advocate for Virginia's community banks, which serve as the economic backbone of our local communities. Under his leadership, VACB has grown to represent more than 100 community banks and vendor partners, providing essential financial services to families and businesses across the great Commonwealth of Virginia. Mr. Yeakel's commitment to excellence was recognized by his peers when he received the 2021 CEO Award of Excellence by from the Virginia Society of Association Executives. His leadership style, emphasizing relationship-building and collaborative problem-solving, has strengthened the voice of community banking in both Richmond and Washington. During his stewardship, VACB successfully navigated serious challenges in the industry, from regulatory changes to technological transformation. Mr. Yeakel has been able to achieve such impressive accomplishments particularly due to his ability to foster productive dialogue between VACB members and Congressional delegations over the years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Yeakel's significant contributions to Virginia's banking industry and the communities it serves. His legacy of leadership, advocacy, and service will continue to benefit Virginians for years to come. I wish him and his family all the best in his well-deserved retirement.

MILLIE DUNN VEASEY POST OFFICE

SPEECH OF

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 9580, to name a post office in North Carolina after Millie Dunn Veasey. As has been noted, she was one of the 855 women from across our country who would serve with the historic Women Army Corps 6888, Central Postal Battalion (Six Triple Eight) during World War II.

The Six Triple Eight was the only African American Women's Army Corps Battalion unit deployed overseas during WWII. Their efforts to resolve a monumental months long backlog of millions of pieces of mail played a critical role in maintaining morale for those fighting in the European Theater.

In England and then France, they sorted millions of pieces of mail while facing challenging social and war conditions. They not only completed their mission but did so in record time.

Each of these women have their own individual stories but many of them are similar to Ms. Veasey's. A desire to serve their country. They didn't set out to make history but they did so anyway.

They served their country honorably and extraordinarily. And came home with little fanfare or ceremony, which they did not mind. And many, like Ms. Veasey, continued to contribute to their communities after they came home.

I am pleased that we are recognizing these women and that this story of service will no longer be lost to history. This postal designation will help ensure that Ms. Veasey's service and dedication is remembered in her local community.

A few years ago, I was pleased to spearhead a successful effort in Congress, along with Senator MORAN, to award the Six Triple Eight with the Congressional Gold Medal so that their service cannot only be appropriately acknowledged but remembered across our Nation.

Ms. Veasey passed away at the age 100 in 2018 and was buried in Raleigh National Cemetery. Sadly, there are less than a handful of surviving members of the Six Triple Eight, including Anna Mae Robertson of Milwaukee, WI.

Through efforts like this, we ensure that their story of service and sacrifice does not remain lost to history and help to inspire the next generation to military service.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MINNESOTA STATE REPRESENTATIVE BRIAN DANIELS

HON. BRAD FINSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Minnesota House Representative Brian Daniels. First elected in 2014 to represent then-District 24B, Representative Daniels has served the people of Minnesota honorably in the State House for the past ten years, most recently representing District 19A.

Representative Daniels has worked tirelessly on behalf of his constituents in Dodge, Goodhue, Rice, Steele, and Waseca counties, particularly with his leadership in championing the priorities of the blind and deaf communities across Minnesota.

Throughout his time in office, Representative Daniels introduced numerous bills advocating for greater language access statewide; including legislation that would increase proficiency standards to teach American Sign Language, as well as legislation that would require elementary schools to screen for dyslexia.

Additionally, he authored legislation to place signage on Interstate 35, directing drivers to Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf and Minnesota State Academy of the Blind in Faribault, bringing awareness to travelers from across the country about these outstanding educational institutions that we are proud to have in southern Minnesota.

Representative Daniels has done an exemplary job representing the people of District 19A, and all of us across southern Minnesota have been well-served by his time in office. I wish him the warmest congratulations on his retirement.

CELEBRATING INEZ BEISWANGER'S 105TH BIRTHDAY

HON. RUDY YAKYM III

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate and wish a very happy and special birthday to Inez Beiswanger, who will turn a whopping 105 years old on December 9, 2024.

Born in Nappanee in 1919, Inez is a resident of Milford, Indiana and one of the many

Hoosiers I have the privilege of representing in Congress. Earlier this month, some friends, family, and other members of the Milford community came together to throw a surprise celebration for Inez, which was a fitting testament to such a special, memorable, and impressive milestone.

As she reflects on more than a century of life well lived, Inez is full of gratitude to God for the many blessings he has bestowed on her. Especially around this time of year, embracing the disposition of gratitude that Inez embodies is something that our Nation could use a lot more of.

Inez also credits her long life in part to trying to always be an optimist about everything, as well as being content and happy with what you have. This mindset has clearly worked, and it is a refreshening antidote to the culture of despair and restlessness that we all too often witness.

As she celebrates more than a century of life lived to the fullest, I join her family, including her three children, seven grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren, and many other Hoosiers in wishing Inez Beiswanger a very happy 105th birthday.

CONGRATULATING LOUIS ENGLISH

HON. JERRY L. CARL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. CARL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Louis English for being named Career Firefighter of the Year for 2024. Louis began his career in 1985 as a Firefighter 1 and received Firefighter 2 certification in 1999. In 2013, he was appointed as Captain. He retired from active fire service in March of 2016 but chose to remain as a volunteer. In June of 2016, he was reinstated as an Active Reserve. With 28 years of full-time service and 8 years of service in the Active Reserve, Captain Louis English has dedicated his life to helping others. I am so proud to have such a selfless individual residing in our district. I congratulate Louis English on this outstanding award.

HONORING DAN MCCORQUODALE

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the public service of Dan McCorquodale of San Jose, California.

From 1953 to 1956, McCorquodale was a Sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps. After graduating from college, he served as a public school teacher in Chula Vista, California. In 1964, he became the youngest person ever elected to the City Council in Chula Vista, where he served as Mayor from 1968 to 1969.

After moving to San Jose, McCorquodale spent a year walking precincts in the third district and was elected to three terms representing north and east San Jose, a portion of the City of Santa Clara, and the cities of Milpitas and Sunnyvale. During his three terms on the Board, he distinguished himself in the issues of environmental protection, transportation, water reclamation, parks, justice, and health and human services. In 1982, McCorquodale was elected State Senator of the 12th district.

Throughout his political career, he was recognized for his effective policymaking. In 1986, he was recognized as Legislator of the Year by the California Trial Lawyers Association. In 1987, he was awarded Humanitarian of the Year by the Humane Society. In 1988, the California Planning and Conservation League named him Legislator of the Year and in 1991, the National Organization for Women recognized him as their Legislator of the Year. In 1991, the California Governor's Committee for Employment of Disabled Persons named him Elected Official of the Year and in 1992, he was named Legislator of the Year by the California Park and Recreation Society.

It has been my great pleasure to work with Dan throughout the years and I honor and thank him for his years in public service and wish him the best.

HONORING THE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF LLOYD B. PLUMMER

HON. RUSS FULCHER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. FULCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish Lloyd B. Plummer a very happy 100th birthday, who will be celebrating his milestone on December 15, 2024.

In 1943, Plummer, the recipient of two Purple Hearts, joined the Army among many courageous men to serve our country. His heroic efforts will never be forgotten.

For those who may not know Lloyd, he was one of the first brave Americans to serve as a paratrooper during World War II, as a member of the 509th Infantry Regiment. Throughout the war, the Fighting 509 was assigned to numerous operations, many of which are now recognized as suicide missions. Lloyd was faced with many battles, where he suffered from frostbite, trench foot, burns, and shrapnel. At all times, he was ready to put his body on the line to serve the country he loved. He is the true definition of a patriot, willing to sacrifice his life for our country.

In 1945, he was discharged from active duty in the Army and returned to Idaho. Lloyd and his family have consistently embodied the traditional values we cherish in Idaho.

I thank Lloyd B. Plummer for his unwavering heroic efforts, and I wish him a very happy birthday.

RECOGNIZING COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, SAMANTHA SNUGGERUD ANDERSON FOR HER EXCELLENT WORK ON BEHALF OF MINNESOTA'S THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. DEAN PHILLIPS

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. PHILLIPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my former Communications Director, Samantha Snuggerud Anderson, for her work on behalf of every constituent in Minnesota's Third Congressional District. In September, Sam was appointed as Communications Director for the Minnesota Department of Education under the transformational leadership of Governor Tim Walz, and I could not be more proud or grateful for her service.

A Minnesota native, Sam graduated from Minnetonka High School before attending Northeastern University in Boston where she earned a bachelor's degree in political science. Sam has been an essential member of my leadership team since the very beginning, and like me, came to this work with a background in marketing and a belief in the politics of improving people's lives.

Spanning impeachments, pandemic, and unrest, the 116th, 117th, and 118th Congresses were historic by any measure. Just when we thought we had cleared the most unprecedented news cycle of our careers, another would rise, and I leaned on Sam's counsel to navigate each. She is a one-of-a-kind professional whose sound judgement, smart instincts, reliable execution, and strategic thinking have been critically important to the success of this team.

We could always count on Sam's calm confidence and level perspective to ground us, but also benefitted from her creative spirit and knack for innovation. She is an architect and keeper of the Dean Team brand, instilling in our community a sense that representation begins with listening and a renewed faith in their government.

Preferring to work behind the scenes, Sam is quick to share kudos and credit, but her invisible hand left its mark in every aspect of our work. She is a skilled manager who built and led a pioneering communications team by identifying potential, carving out space for creativity, and challenging herself and others to do their best. When pitching a communications idea to Sam, her colleagues have learned to have a better strategy than, ''this is the way it has always been done!'' She has helped countless staffers grow into communications thinkers, coaching even the wonkiest members of our team on meeting—and making—moments.

From Good Morning America to the Star Tribune, Sam has been there to help pitch, prep, and powder my nose for moments big and small. Under her leadership, our communications team became a branding powerhouse, crafting powerful messages, landing big interviews, producing captivating content, building a mass communications program so strong I regularly receive thanks from constituents on the receiving end of unsolicited emails, and even going viral for a TikTok dance or two. Sam did it all with an eye for authenticity and improvement, and each success became a new foundation on which to build.

Her work helped earn me a seat at the leadership table in 2022 when I was elected Co-Chair of the House Democratic Policy and Communications Committee (DPCC), and her reimagining of communications staffing and budgets has been recognized by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the House as best in class. Sam has been invited by the CAO to coach new Chiefs of Staff on modernizing their own communications teams, leadership that will surely leave this institution operating better than she found it for generations to come.

In addition to her many professional talents, Sam is a genuine and thoughtful human, pottery aficionado, gluten-free bread enthusiast, and we're all better for having served alongside her.

The people of Minnesota's Third Congressional District were lucky to have her dedication and leadership, and she is dearly missed. However, I'm extraordinarily happy that she will continue to do this work and serve the Nation and the people Minnesota at the Minnesota Department of Education. I wish Sam all the best in her future endeavors and thank her for six years of faithful service to this Nation.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MINNESOTA STATE REPRESENTATIVE BRIAN PFARR

HON. BRAD FINSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Minnesota House Representative Brian Pfarr. First elected in 2020 to represent then-District 20A, Representative Pfarr has served the people of southern Minnesota in the State House for the past four years, most recently as the representative for District 22B.

Prior to his service in the State Legislature, Representative Pfarr honorably served our state as a colonel in the Minnesota Army National Guard. Since his retirement in 2021, he has brought the same tireless work ethic to representing the people of Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Rice, and Scott counties.

The priorities of his constituents have always been at the forefront of Representative Pfarr's service in the State House, particularly through his continued leadership in the many House committees on which he has served throughout the years, including Ways and Means and Commerce Finance and Policy.

Representative Pfarr has done an exemplary job representing the people of District 22B, and all of us across southern Minnesota have been well-served by his time in office. I am grateful for his many years of dedicated public service, and I wish him the warmest congratulations on his retirement.

RECOGNIZING DIRECTOR OF SCHEDULING AND OPERATIONS, MAE HOUGO FOR HER EXCELLENT WORK ON BEHALF OF MINNESOTA'S THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. DEAN PHILLIPS

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. PHILLIPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my Director of Scheduling and Operations, Mae Hougo, for her work on behalf of every constituent in Minnesota's Third Congressional District. I could not be more proud or grateful for her service.

Mae was raised in Minnesota and graduated from Cretin-Derham Hall. She ventured off to attend the College of Holy Cross where she earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Government. Mae's passion for politics led her to many interesting and informative experiences that ranged from City Hall in Saint Paul, the Minnesota State Capitol, and Washington, D.C. Her experience of both campaigns and official side work have been invaluable.

Mae has worked as a political scheduler for over five years in Minnesota. Her unofficial title is the ''keeper of space and time.'' From busy session weeks, to packed August recesses, if things were going smoothly for my team and me, it was due to Mae's tireless work. Her foresight and creative thinking in a pinch saved each of us from more than our fair share of mishaps. Her colleagues will always remember Mae's organized and strategic thinking. Mae is dependable, determined, fiercely passionate about the work, and incredibly hardworking.

Mae has grown her role immensely during her tenure in this office—she began her time with us as District Scheduler and ended it as Director of Scheduling and Operations, overseeing the scheduling process in both Minnesota and Washington, D.C. Mae's sound judgment and critical thinking have led her to become a trusted advisor to me. Her talent combined with her heart for the work have made her an invaluable part of this team.

The people of Minnesota's Third Congressional District were lucky to have her dedication and leadership, and she will be dearly missed. I wish Mae all the best in her future endeavors and thank her for five years of faithful service to this Nation in my office.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S6825–6855

Measures Introduced: Twenty-three bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 5429–5451, S.J. Res. 119–120, and S. Res. 922.

Pages S6842–43

Measures Reported:

S. 4667, to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish the Life Sciences Research Security Board, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–264)

S. 5093, to sunset the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 118–265)

Page S6842

Measures Passed:

Condemning the Government of Iran's State-Sponsored Persecution of the Baha'i Minority: Committee on Foreign Relations was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 74, condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights, and the resolution was then agreed to, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto:

Pages S6830–32

Wyden Amendment No. 3312, to amend the preamble. **Pages S6831–32**

Secure Adjacent Federal Property Act: Senate passed S. 1868, to require an interagency study to produce a security assessment process on adjacent space to high-security leased space to accommodate a Federal agency, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

Pages S6851–52

American Music Tourism Act: Senate passed S. 4212, to amend the Visit America Act to promote music tourism, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and the following amendment proposed thereto:

Pages S6852–53

Van Hollen (for Blackburn) Amendment No. 3313, to provide a technical correction. **Page S6853**

National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Reauthorization Act: Senate passed S. 3606, to reauthorize the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S6853–55**

Stomach Cancer Awareness Month: Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 908, expressing support for the goals of Stomach Cancer Awareness Month, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S6855**

Johnson Nomination—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Tiffany Rene Johnson, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

Pages S6825–28, S6828–29

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 50 yeas to 45 nays (Vote No. EX. 315), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Pages S6828–29**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 3 p.m., on Monday, December 9, 2024, Senate resume consideration of the nomination, post-cloture; and that at 5:30 p.m., Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination as provided under the order of Wednesday, December 4, 2024. **Page S6855**

Neary Nomination: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Keli Marie Neary, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

Pages S6829–30, S6832–38

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 48 yeas to 45 nays (Vote No. EX. 316), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Pages S6832–33**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 52 yeas to 45 nays (Vote No. EX. 314), Sarah Morgan Davenport, of New Mexico, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Mexico.

Page S6828

Messages from the House: Pages S6840–41
Measures Referred: Pages S6841–42
Measures Placed on the Calendar: Page S6842
Executive Communications: Page S6842
Executive Reports of Committees: Page S6842
Additional Cosponsors: Pages S6843–44
Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: Pages S6844–50
Additional Statements: Page S6840
Amendments Submitted: Pages S6850–51
Authorities for Committees to Meet: Page S6851
Privileges of the Floor: Page S6851

Record Votes: Three record votes were taken today. (Total—316) Pages S6828–29, S6833

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 4:37 p.m., until 3 p.m. on Monday, December 9, 2024. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S6855.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

PFAS EXPOSURES

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Chemical Safety, Waste Management, Environmental Justice, and Regulatory Oversight concluded a hearing to examine the public health impacts of PFAS exposures, after receiving testimony from Laurel Schaider, Silent Spring Institute, Newton, Massachusetts; Suzanne E. Fenton, North Carolina State University Center for Human Health and the Environment, Raleigh; and Michael Larranaga, American Industrial Hygiene Association, Dallas, Texas.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Finance: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of David Samuel Johnson, of Virginia, to be Inspector General for Tax Administration, Department of the Treasury.

GLOBAL MAGNITSKY LAWS

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine implementation of the Global Magnitsky Laws, after receiving testimony from Adam Keith, Human Rights First, New York, New York; and William Browder, Global Magnitsky Justice Campaign, London, United Kingdom.

USPS OVERSIGHT

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the United States Postal Service, focusing on understanding proposed service changes, after receiving testimony from Louis DeJoy, Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer, United States Postal Service.

FDA

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee concluded a hearing to examine what the Food and Drug Administration is doing to reduce the diabetes and obesity epidemics in America, focusing on the food and beverage industry, after receiving testimony from Robert M. Califf, Commissioner, and Jim Jones, Deputy Commissioner for Human Foods, both of the Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 18 public bills, H.R. 10299–10316; and 2 resolutions, H. Res. 1608–1609, were introduced. Pages H6412–13

Additional Cosponsors: Page H6414

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 3378, to establish criminal offenses with respect to violations involving ATMs, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–798, Part 1);

H.R. 6322, to evaluate and disrupt financing to Hamas, and to amend title 31, United States Code, to prohibit the exchange stabilization fund from being used to deal in Special Drawing Rights from state sponsors of terrorism, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–799, Part 1);

H.R. 8302, to establish a commission to review the programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and make recommendations for legislative reforms, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–800, Part 1);

H.R. 5409, to amend the Defense Production Act of 1950 to require the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to determine whether a national security review is needed for reportable agricultural land transactions referred by the Secretary of Agriculture, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–801, Part 1);

H.R. 5557, to impose sanctions against certain persons engaged in the proliferation or use of foreign commercial spyware, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–802, Part 1);

H.R. 6000, to freeze $6,000,000,000 of Iranian funds held in Qatar, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–803, Part 1);

H.R. 760, to impose sanctions with respect to Communist Chinese military and surveillance companies, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–804, Part 1);

H.R. 5523, to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to include information in the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report on improvements by countries in combating narcotics-related money laundering, to require a report on the consistency of Bank Secrecy Act examinations, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–805, Part 1);

H.R. 5845, to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to address transaction account guarantees, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–806, Part 1);

H.R. 9313, to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to report to Congress on the compliance under the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 of all office buildings under the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the General Services Administration, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–807);

H.R. 9541, to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to authorize Federal agencies to provide certain essential assistance for hazard mitigation for electric utilities, and for other purposes. (H. Rept. 118–808);

H.R. 6083, to amend the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 to extend waiver of duplicate benefits limitation for certain payments to individuals in the event of a major disaster, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–809);

H.R. 9591, to require the Administrator of General Services to sell certain property related to United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–810);

H.R. 9750, to authorize the President to provide disaster assistance to States and Indian Tribes under a major disaster recovery program, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–811);

H.R. 9037, to require the development of a workforce plan for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (H. Rept. 118–812);

H.R. 9024, to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to take certain actions relating to incident periods and extreme weather, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–813);

H.R. 2892, to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on the effectiveness of local alerting systems, and for other purposes, with amendments (H. Rept. 118–814);

H.R. 6984, to designate the Federal building located at 300 E. 3rd Street in North Platte, Nebraska, as the ''Virginia Smith Federal Building'', and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–815);

H.R. 8728, to establish alternate procedures for lump sum payments for certain covered small disasters, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–816);

H.R. 9121, to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to allow Indian Tribal Governments to directly request fire management assistance declarations and grants, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–817);

H.R. 8530, to require Facility Security Committees to respond to security recommendations issued by the Federal Protective Service relating to facility security, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–818);

H.R. 6435, to ensure that a declaration for a major disaster or emergency is made on a timely basis, rural areas receive assistance, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–819);

H.R. 9740, to direct the Secretary of Defense to increase the maximum amount of contraceptive supplies provided to a beneficiary through the TRICARE Program (H. Rept. 118–820);

H.R. 4406, to require reporting regarding accreditation of basic training programs of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–821, Part 1);

H.R. 3284, to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to submit an annual report on the impact of certain Medicare regulations on provider and payer consolidation with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–822); and

H.R. 3284, to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to submit an annual report on the impact of certain Medicare regulations on provider and payer consolidation with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–765, Part 2); **Pages H6411–12**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Meuser to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H6365**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:39 a.m. and reconvened at 12 p.m. **Page H6376**

Recess: The House recessed at 1:28 p.m. and reconvened at 4:45 p.m. **Page H6395**

Suspensions—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures. Consideration began Wednesday, December 4th.

Federal Agency Performance Act: S. 709, amended, to improve performance and accountability in the Federal Government, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 389 yeas to 6 nays, Roll No. 484; **Page H6395**

Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2024: H.R. 9598, amended, to amend the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act to reauthorize such Office, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 399 yeas to 1 nay, Roll No. 485; and **Pages H6396–97**

Designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 119 Main Street in Plains, Georgia, as the "Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Post Office": H.R. 9600, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 119 Main Street in Plains, Georgia, as the "Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Post Office", by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 381 yeas to 15 nays with two voting "present", Roll No. 486. **Pages H6396–97**

Prove It Act of 2024: H.R. 7198, to amend title 5, United States Code, to require greater transparency for Federal regulatory decisions that impact small businesses, by a yea-and-nay vote of 208 yeas to 196 nays, Roll No. 489.

Pages H6379–92, H6397–H6400

Rejected the Landsman motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on the Judiciary by a yea-and-nay vote of 197 yeas to 206 nays, Roll No. 488.

Pages H6397–H6400

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. **Pages H6379–80**

Rejected:

Velázquez amendment (No. 1 printed in part B of H. Rept. 118–791) that sought to require the Office of Advocacy to train rule-writing staff at agencies on the requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act at least once every four years (by a recorded vote of 199 ayes to 204 noes, Roll No. 487). **Pages H6397–H6400**

H. Res. 1602, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 5349) and (H.R. 7198) was agreed to yesterday, December 4th.

Question of Privilege: Representative Casten rose to a question of the privileges of the House and submitted a resolution. Upon examination of the resolution, the Chair determined that the resolution qualified. Subsequently, the House agreed to the Scalise motion to refer to the Committee on Ethics the resolution (H. Res. 1608), directing the Committee on Ethics of the House of Representatives to release to the public the committee's report on its investigation into allegations against former Representative Matt Gaetz, by a yea-and-nay vote of 206 yeas to 198 nays, Roll No. 490. **Pages H6400–01**

Question of Privilege: Representative Cohen rose to a question of the privileges of the House and submitted a resolution. Upon examination of the resolution, the Chair determined that the resolution qualified. Subsequently, the House agreed to the Scalise motion to refer to the Committee on Ethics the resolution (H. Res. 1609) directing the Committee on Ethics to preserve and release records of the Committee's review of the alleged misconduct of Matthew Louis Gaetz II of Florida while serving as a Member of the House of Representatives, by a recorded vote of 204 ayes to 198 noes, Roll No. 491. **Pages H6401–02**

Member Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Kim, wherein he resigned as Representative for the Third Congressional District of New Jersey, effective on Sunday, December 8, 2024. **Page H6403**

Senate Referrals: S. 712 was held at the desk. S. 3242 was held at the desk. S. 3738 was held at the desk. S. 4477 was held at the desk. **Page H6369**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H6369.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Six yea-and-nay votes and two recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H6395, H6396, H6396–97, H6397–98, H6399, H6400, H6401, and H6402.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Committee Meetings

DESIGN VS. DEFAULT: ANALYZING SHIFTS IN CYBERSECURITY

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection held a hearing entitled "Design vs. Default: Analyzing Shifts in Cybersecurity". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

OVERSIGHT OF THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Committee on Oversight and Accountability: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Oversight of the U.S. Census Bureau". Testimony was heard from Robert

L. Santos, Director, U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce.

FACT AND FICTION: GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF THE VA BUDGET SHORTFALL

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Fact and Fiction: Getting to the Bottom of the VA Budget Shortfall''. Testimony was heard from Shereef Elnahal, M.D., Under Secretary for Health, Department of Veterans Affairs; and Joshua Jacobs, Under Secretary for Benefits, Department of Veterans Affairs.

REBUILDING THE ARSENAL OF DEMOCRACY: THE IMPERATIVE TO STRENGTHEN AMERICA'S DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL BASE AND WORKFORCE

Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Rebuilding the Arsenal of Democracy: The Imperative to Strengthen America's Defense Industrial Base and Workforce''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

SECRET SERVICE SECURITY FAILURES AND THE ATTEMPTS TO ASSASSINATE PRESIDENT-ELECT DONALD J. TRUMP

Task Force on the Attempted Assassination of Donald J. Trump: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Secret Service Security Failures and the Attempts to Assassinate President-Elect Donald J. Trump''. Testimony was heard from Ronald Rowe, Acting Director, U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security.

BUSINESS MEETING

Task Force on the Attempted Assassination of Donald J. Trump: Full Committee held a business meeting on Final Report of Findings and Recommendations. Final Report of Findings and Recommendations were ordered reported, without amendment.

Joint Meetings

BELARUS

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Commission concluded a hearing to examine the role of Belarus in Russia's crimes, after receiving testimony from Gabrielius Landsbergis, Republic of Lithuania Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs; Matvei Kupreichyk, BELPOL; and Kateryna Rashevska, Regional Center for Human Rights.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2024

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

3 p.m., Monday, December 9

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Tiffany Rene Johnson, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, and vote on confirmation thereon at 5:30 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Friday, December 6

House Chamber

Program for Friday: Consideration of H.R. 5349—Crucial Communism Teaching Act.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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