

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO YOUNG STAFF MEMBERS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF TEXAS AND THE UNITED STATES

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, in these tumultuous days of crisis and challenge, Members of Congress know well, perhaps better than most, how blessed our Nation is to have in reserve such exceptional young men and women who will go on to become leaders in their local communities, states, and the nation in the areas of business, education, law, government, philanthropy, the arts and culture, and the military.

We know this because we see them and benefit from their contributions every day. Many of them work for us in our offices as junior staff members, congressional fellows, or interns and they do amazing work for and on behalf of the constituents we are privileged to represent.

Madam Speaker, I believe there is no higher calling than the call to serve a cause larger than ourselves. That is why I ran for public office. I was inspired to serve by President Kennedy who said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," and by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who said:

"Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. . . . You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

By this measure, there are several other great young men and women who served as volunteers this year in my offices. They brave the dangers of the pandemic that has wrought so much suffering and heartbreak across our nation. They cheerfully do their duty in the U.S. Capitol complex that just over one year ago was the site of an insurrection attack not seen since the War of 1812. These dedicated and public-spirited men and women may toil in obscurity but their contributions to the constituents we serve are deeply appreciated. That is why today I rise to pay tribute to five extraordinary young persons for their service to my constituents in the 18th Congressional District of Texas and to the American people. They are:

Alexander Nordahl, University of Houston;
Shania Jackson, Texas Tech University;
Laura Rincon-Bianchi, University of Houston;

Jordan Webster, Howard University; and
Ayana Ahuja, The Madeira School.

Madam Speaker, the energy, intelligence, and idealism these wonderful young people brought to my office and those interning in the offices of my colleagues help keep our democracy vibrant. The insights, skills, and knowledge of the governmental process they gain from their experiences will last a lifetime and

prove invaluable to them as they go about making their mark in this world.

Because of persons like them the future of our country is bright, and its best days lie ahead. I wish them all well.

Madam Speaker, I am grateful that such thoughtful committed young men and women can be found working in my office, those of my colleagues, and in every community in America. Their good works will keep America great, good, and forever young.

HOMETOWN HERO—RAYFIELD WRIGHT

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Ms. VAN DUYN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of North Texas legend, Rayfield Wright, who passed away last week.

Rayfield was a long-time player for the Dallas Cowboys, marking his legacy as a hall of famer both on and off the field.

During his time with the Cowboys, Rayfield earned the iconic nickname "Big Cat" for his ability on his feet, despite his looming size. He helped lead the Cowboys in the 70's, winning an impressive five NFC championships and two Super Bowls along the way.

After thirteen seasons and an incredible 200+ games, Rayfield was rightfully inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame. His fellow Cowboys legend, Roger Staubach put it simply, "he was absolutely the best."

But his story did not end there, in fact far from it. Rayfield went on to put the same love and energy that he put into football, into his community.

Just last year, Rayfield put on a charity golf tournament outside Fort Worth to provide much needed relief to the community during the pandemic. Proceeds from the tournament went to a local food bank and first responders.

I thank Rayfield for always putting North Texas first, and inspiring us on the field and in the community. DFW will always remember his legacy; may he rest in peace.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF RITA BROCK-PERINI

HON. RUBEN GALLEGO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Mr. GALLEGO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember and celebrate the life of Rita Brock-Perini, who passed away in April. Rita was the first woman in her family to join the military, and she dedicated her life to service and inspired many—including myself—to do more in support of our Nation's veterans.

Rita was born in Phoenix in 1938 as one of ten children. After graduating from St. Mary's

High School, she earned her nursing degree and spent ten years working as a nurse before becoming a captain in the Air Force Nursing Corps, serving during one of the most violent periods of the Vietnam war. As one of the more experienced nurses, she cared for not only the soldiers wounded in war, but for her fellow nurses as well. Rita left the Air Force in 1971 to take a job with the American Red Cross, continuing her service to those in need.

Even after retiring in 2003, Rita never lost her passion for service. She became Vice President of the Veterans Medical Leadership Council (VMLC), an organization dedicated to ensuring quality care for veterans in Maricopa County. At VMLC, Rita managed the Returning Warriors program, which worked with the local VA to provide emergency services to veterans.

I am lucky to have been able to consider Rita a friend. She was one of the first people to welcome me to the American Legion when I moved to Phoenix as a young veteran, and I will never forget her kindness and support. My thoughts and prayers are with her family, friends, and our community. She will be greatly missed.

ASSET SEIZURE FOR UKRAINE RECONSTRUCTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6930 the Asset Seizure for Ukraine Reconstruction Act, which authorizes the President to, subject to certain conditions, seize assets belonging to a foreign person whose wealth is derived in part through political support for or corruption linked to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

In the two years that follow this bill's enactment, the President may seize assets if Russia remains engaged in a conflict of territorial conquest in Ukraine; the President has imposed sanctions on the owner of the assets for reasons related to corruption, human rights violations, malign influence, or conflicts in Ukraine; and the assets are valued at over \$5 million.

The seized assets may be liquidated, and the resulting funds may only be used for specified purposes, including the post-conflict reconstruction of Ukraine, humanitarian assistance and refugee support for the Ukrainian people, weapons for Ukraine's uniformed military forces, and humanitarian and development assistance for the Russian people.

There is no question of whether the Russian Federation, under the direction of Vladimir Putin, has been defying the laws of war throughout their unprovoked, unjust, and unlawful invasion of Ukraine.

In the three decades since gaining independence, Ukraine has sought closer economic, social, and political ties with the free market and democratic nations of the West.

• 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.

Since 2013, the Russian Federation has imposed a campaign of political, economic, and military aggression in Ukraine.

Today the world is witnessing a manufactured war, arbitrarily ordered by Vladimir Putin.

President Putin and his associates must be held personally liable for the war crimes committed against the people of Ukraine.

Russia claims it is not attacking civilians, yet thousands of people have been killed, mostly from explosive weapons with a wide impact area, including shelling from heavy artillery and multi-launch rocket systems, and missile and air strikes.

Families are being separated by war, adults and children are being ruthlessly killed, and a rogue Russia is violently crushing political speech opposing the war from its own citizens.

As Russian ground forces advance in Ukraine, Ukrainians are sheltering from artillery and cruise missiles in subways and bomb shelters.

The western world must continue to march in unison against this senseless Russian invasion of a sovereign nation.

It is our duty to do all we can to stop these brutal attacks on democracy. Squeezing the bank accounts and assets of Russian oligarchs will eventually force them to take matter into their own hands and stop Putin.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6930 the Asset Seizure for Ukraine Reconstruction Act to help put an end to Putin's evil invasion.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 100TH
ANNIVERSARY OF PRINCETON
BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER IN
BIRMINGHAM, AL

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Ms. SEWELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of Princeton Baptist Medical Center and Baptist Health System.

Though the history of Princeton Baptist Medical Center begins in 1922, the framework of the hospital, dates back to 1906 with the establishment of Birmingham Infirmary by Dr. William Christopher Gewin. Specializing in compassionate care in a Christian environment, Birmingham Infirmary was a pioneering medical center in the city of Birmingham, serving as the city's first training school for nurses.

By 1922, the Birmingham Baptist Association assumed ownership of Birmingham Infirmary, making it the first time any local Baptist association owned a hospital. As a faith-based hospital, Birmingham Baptist Hospital, now Princeton Baptist Medical Center, built its organization on the premise that it would provide service to patients regardless of their ability to pay. During their first day of operation, Princeton served 39 patients, with 11 more admitted by the day's end without any operating capital.

Ten years later, in 1930, the Princeton Baptist Medical Center leased a second location previously owned by one of the original medical staff, Dr. Seale Harris, who originally built and began operating the residential hospital. After acquiring another facility, the Baptist Health System began rapidly expanding, undergoing multiple major hospital expansions

and renovations. As the hospital infrastructure started to grow, its network was not far behind, expanding to meet the needs of its patients by adding new departments to expand critical services and conducting clinical research to stay abreast with the latest medical advancements.

During World War II, Princeton Baptist Medical Center became the first hospital in the region to have a United States Cadet Nurse Corps unit hosting over 100 students. By the 1960s, they continued building upon their esteemed reputation by performing pioneering brain surgery at Princeton Baptist Medical Center, becoming one of the first hospitals in the city to desegregate its wards, and introducing the use of automation in their laboratories.

With growth as a cornerstone, during the 1990s, additional hospitals joined Princeton Baptist to build one of the state's largest and most comprehensive networks of acute care hospitals and a true community of care; a network that was strengthened in 2015 through a partnership with Brookwood Medical Center to create the five-hospital system of Brookwood Baptist Health.

Upholding its "high tech and high touch" reputation, Princeton Baptist Medical Center has stayed at the forefront of technology, staffing the hospital with present-day pioneers bringing cutting-edge health care to the people of the north and central Alabama.

From its humble beginnings in 1922, Princeton Baptist Medical center has upheld its rich legacy of medical ministry by staying active in the community through education. Noted as a teaching hospital, Princeton Baptist Medical Center has several educational programs, becoming the first health care system in the United States to implement a pastoral education program and student internship. Now Princeton continues to provide these transformational opportunities by hosting multiple residency programs, creating the Ida V. Moffett School of Nursing at Samford University and the Princeton Baptist Achievers Program, a mentoring/scholarship program for high school students interested in healthcare.

Working to provide the most efficient, cost-effective, and patient-friendly care, Princeton Baptist Medical Center now has a medical staff of more than 230 physicians, an additional 1,700 employees, and 505-licensed hospital beds. As the first hospital under Brookwood Baptist Health, Princeton Medical Center is a centerpiece to the state's largest health care system providing innovative and compassionate care to all patients.

On a personal note, my family and I have experienced Princeton Baptist Medical Center's compassionate care firsthand. Their doctors, nurses, administrators, and other health care professionals provided excellent care while giving us the support and resources we needed to get well. They were God-sent, and the Sewell family is eternally grateful.

On behalf of Alabama's 7th Congressional District, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 100th anniversary of Princeton Baptist Medical Center and its vital contributions to the medical profession and the health and well-being of the Birmingham community.

ACKNOWLEDGING FAITH AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (FACE)
AND THE SAIGU CAMPAIGN

HON. ANDY KIM

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Mr. KIM of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Faith and Community Empowerment (FACE)'s efforts to unite Los Angeles on the eve of the 30th anniversary of the Los Angeles Riots.

As many of us remember, the Los Angeles Riots that occurred during the spring of 1992 left 63 people killed, over 3,000 businesses destroyed, and more than a billion dollars in property damage. The city's Korean community alone saw more than five hundred million dollars of property damage—leaving many to face the uncertainty of no longer being able to provide for themselves and their families.

As the 30th anniversary approached, FACE worked alongside community organizations to launch the Serve Advocate Inspire Give Unite (SAIGU) campaign to promote peace, tolerance, and unity across Los Angeles. Beginning tomorrow, events such as documentary screenings, art exhibitions, and interfaith prayer sessions will take place across the city. Together, these events are designed to highlight the community's desire to remember and heal from those traumatic events. This year's events are meant to build bridges of understanding and combat the myths that drive wedges between the city's diverse and vibrant ethnic communities.

30 years later, this anniversary comes at a time of rising xenophobic rhetoric, particularly against the AAPI community. As the one of only four Korean Americans currently serving in Congress, I am incredibly thankful of the work that FACE and others have done to reject hatred and promote diversity and understanding. I look forward to seeing the success of the SAIGU campaign and following FACE's continuing good work.

PATENTS FOR HUMANITY ACT OF
2021

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H.R. 5796, the Patents for Humanity Act of 2021, which will codify into law an expedited process to obtain patents for inventors who use groundbreaking technology to meet humanitarian challenges.

H.R. 5796 establishes a competitive process that awards certificates to be redeemed to accelerate applications, appeals, and reexaminations at the Patent and Trademark Office.

The Obama administration established Patents for Humanity in 2012 as an awards program initiative to encourage businesses to apply their patented technology to address global development challenges.

Since 2012, the program has proven to achieve that by rewarding innovators for using technology to better the global community.

2020 Winners included: Usee Vision providing prescription eyeglasses to people who

lack access to vision care, the PfSPZ Malaria vaccine with the highest effectiveness rate for a Malaria vaccine, NEW generator recovering nutrients from wastewater, and NonSpec providing affordable and adjustable prosthetic limb systems.

These inventions are just some of the many innovative solutions that Patents for Humanity fast-tracked in aiding world humanitarian issues.

Innovation is a vital tool in bettering society, but often it comes slowly, with high costs and inefficient implementation. The pandemic has only highlighted how important it is to develop solutions quickly and effectively.

Codifying Patents for Humanity will ensure that innovators can provide solutions to the less fortunate in a sustainable and efficient way through the Patent Office.

Patents are essential to the United States' economy as they encourage creative disruption and growth within the country. Patents need to remain accessible and innovation needs to be protected; especially when it comes to groundbreaking technology that can assist others on a humanitarian level.

Companies should prioritize Corporate Social Responsibility to align commercial interests with the global good. Patents for Humanity encourages corporate citizenship through rewarding humanitarian engagement and proves that reaching underserved markets is compatible with business.

Congress needs to reward innovation and incentivize creativity to progress intellectually and scientifically in solving global development problems, which is why I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 5796.

HOMETOWN HERO—MIKE E. SIMONDS

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Ms. VAN DUYN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mike E. Simonds, Senior Chief at Tarrant County Sheriff's Office. We congratulate Senior Chief Simonds on his retirement after dedicating forty-two years of service to the citizens of Tarrant County, including twenty-one years with the Arlington Police Department.

Senior Chief Simonds has served an instrumental role in our community and state through years patrolling our streets, keeping drugs out of our cities and ensuring murderers were put behind bars. His unwavering commitment is unmatched, from assisting in the implementation of the nationwide Amber Alert Program, to helping develop the number one Human Trafficking Unit in North Texas, to building a robust Narcotics Unit, to growing the largest Auto Theft Task Force in the state.

Senior Chief Simonds served the last five years as the first Senior Chief for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office with honor and integrity, bringing exceptional leadership to the agency.

I thank Senior Chief Simonds for his leadership and the lasting impact he has made with our law enforcement partners. He serves as a role model and mentor to future leaders maintaining the highest of standards. Congratulations to Senior Chief Simonds on his retire-

ment and lasting memory of a career of service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SALUD O. CARBAJAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Mr. CARBAJAL. Madam Speaker, on April 27, 2022, I regrettably missed a vote in the House of Representatives due to a meeting I had with a constituent.

Had I been present, I would have voted AYE on Roll Call No. 127, H.R. 7314, the Assessing Xi's Interference and Subversion Act.

ASSESSING XI'S INTERFERENCE AND SUBVERSION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 7314, the Assessing Xi's Interference and Subversion Act or AXIS Act.

The AXIS Act requires the Department of State to report to Congress on how China's government is directly or indirectly supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The report will include evidence of the Chinese government helping Russian entities circumvent U.S. sanctions, inhibiting the U.S. government's investigations, or assisting Russia with any technology, propaganda efforts, and financial arrangements.

The bill notes that Chinese Communist Party General Secretary Xi Jinping met with Russian leader Putin on February 4, 2022, less than three weeks prior to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the two released a joint statement outlining a strategic partnership with "no limits" and no "forbidden" areas for cooperation.

Additionally, it notes that China abstained from UN votes condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 25th and March 2nd; and that China has not publicly condemned Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion.

The Chinese government has demonstrated its support of Russia and Putin through complicity.

China opposed U.S. military support for Ukraine, and abstained when the UN General Assembly voted in favor of a resolution blaming Russia for the humanitarian consequences of illegal aggression against Ukraine.

Russian propaganda is spreading through China, subjecting the Chinese people to the delusion that the invasion of Ukraine is only a "special military operation".

Russia has claimed that their invasion is partly backed by Ukrainians attempting to free Ukraine from its Soviet Legacy.

The Chinese Communist Party has traditionally supported and encouraged Russia, as they are both rooted in communist ideology.

When Xi and President Joe Biden spoke on March 18th, President Biden communicated that there would be "implications and consequences if China provides material support

to Russia as it conducts brutal attacks against Ukrainian cities and civilians."

As a result of China's disinformation efforts related to Russia's war against Ukraine, China must be held accountable for suppressing Russia's war crimes, as well.

Russian war crimes include the indiscriminate killing of countless civilians. In light of this, if China is found to be materially supporting Russia in its war against Ukraine, there should be swift and rigorous consequences for China.

Specifically, this bill would include a discussion of China's support for Russia in terms of:

Helping Russia or Russian entities evade U.S. sanctions or multilateral sanctions and export controls;

Inhibiting U.S. export control end-use checks, including interviews and investigations in China;

Providing Russia with any technology that supports Russian intelligence or military capabilities, including certain classifications of semiconductors (EAR99);

Establishing economic or financial agreements that will have the effect of alleviating the impact of U.S. sanctions or multilateral sanctions;

Furthering Russia's disinformation and propaganda efforts;

Coordinating to hinder the efforts of multilateral organizations, including the UN, to provide aid to the people or government of Ukraine, to condemn Russia's war, to hold Russia accountable for the invasion and its prosecution of the war, or to hold those complicit accountable; and

Providing any material, technical, or logistical support, including to the Russian military or intelligence agencies and state-owned or state-linked enterprises.

We must ensure that, if China is aiding Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war against Ukraine, then such actions do not go unpunished.

This bill allows Congress to monitor the Chinese government's activity and assistance, and act accordingly. The report required by the bill would specify efforts relating to U.S. action and sanctions, recommending ways for our steps against Russia to be as effective as possible.

This alliance between the Chinese Communist Party and the Kremlin is a serious threat to the U.S. and our allies.

The world should know how China is aiding and abetting Russia in evading the effects of international sanctions.

I urge all members to join me in voting for H.R. 7314, the AXIS Act because as my colleague Congressman GREGORY MEEKS said, "if China is complicit in the bloodshed of the Ukrainian people, the world should know that too".

HONORING FARHAD MANSOURIAN

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Mr. HUFFMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today, along with Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, in celebration of Farhad Mansourian as he retires from Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART). Mr. Mansourian has dedicated

his 43-year career to public service, spending the last 11 years serving as SMART's intrepid general manager.

Mr. Mansourian was a terrorist officer in the Iranian Imperial Army before he escaped to the United States after the fall of the Shah. After obtaining degrees in civil engineering and political science from Sacramento State University, he settled in Marin County where he began his civil engineering and public service work in 1979. After serving for 32 years, including 9 years as Marin County's Public Works Director, Mr. Mansourian retired leaving behind an impressive legacy of accomplishments for the county. His retirement, however, proved brief, as he was quickly recruited to become SMART's General Manager, a position he accepted in 2011.

As SMART General Manager, Mr. Mansourian was tasked with turning 45 miles of repurposed rail track into a thriving rail line in the aftermath of the 2007 to 2008 financial crisis and the significant budget challenges it created. Applying his vast experience, skills and talents, he worked creatively to solve many engineering, construction, and funding challenges, coordinating with partner transportation agencies, elected officials, government agencies, community groups, and the public to meet project expectations.

Mr. Mansourian's ability to manage difficult circumstances and collaborate with independent and often times competing jurisdictions on a shoestring budget is masterful and a key reason regional passenger rail is a reality for SMART riders today. Under his leadership, SMART successfully operates this regional rail line with 12 stops spanning Northern Sonoma County to San Francisco Bay and serving a peak of 700,000 riders. This success of SMART has also contributed to cleaner air for local residents as its riders have prevented 8.1 million pounds of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from being released into the environment.

Madam Speaker, Farhad Mansourian exemplifies what it means to be a public servant. His dedication to regional transportation solutions and improving accessibility and sustainability for Marin and Sonoma Counties will benefit generations to come. Therefore, please join us in congratulating him on his decades of inspiring work and in wishing him a fulfilling and relaxing retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF UW-PARKSIDE
FOR HOSTING THE SELECT COMMITTEE
ON ECONOMIC DISPARITY AND FAIRNESS IN
GROWTH ON CAMPUS FOR A
CONGRESSIONAL HEARING

HON. BRYAN STEIL

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to thank and honor the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. On April 11, UW-Parkside hosted the Select Committee on the Economy for a hearing on education pathways to opportunity. I am grateful to UW-Parkside Chancellor Debbie Ford and the students and faculty who made this hearing possible.

It was truly an honor to host my Congressional colleagues in Southeast Wisconsin to

discuss policies that help workers enter, re-enter and remain in the workforce. As we in Wisconsin all know, UW-Parkside, along with our other state and private trade schools, offer unlimited opportunities. UW-Parkside has worked with community stakeholders, including local businesses, to create innovative professional programs. These programs enable folks in our community to develop new skills and enter the careers of the future.

I am grateful to my colleagues, Chairman HIMES and Congresswoman MOORE, for joining me to learn and visit UW-Parkside to learn about the opportunities this university has to offer our community. Again, I thank UW-Parkside for their role in our very informative hearing.

UKRAINE DEMOCRACY DEFENSE
LEND-LEASE ACT OF 2022

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 3522 the Ukraine Democracy Defense Lend-Lease Act which temporarily waives certain requirements related to the President's authority to lend or lease defense articles if the defense articles are intended for Ukraine's government or the governments of other Eastern European countries affected by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

For FY2022 and FY2023, an agreement to lend or lease defense articles under this bill will not be subject to certain requirements and provisions that typically apply to such lend-lease agreements, including a requirement that generally prohibits a loan or lease period from exceeding five years.

S. 3522 will allow the President to establish expedited procedures to ensure the timely delivery of defense articles loaned or leased to Ukraine under this bill.

There is no question that the Russian Federation, under the direction of Vladimir Putin has been defying the laws of war throughout their unprovoked, unjust, and unlawful full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

In the three decades since gaining its independence, Ukraine has sought closer economic, social, and political ties with the free market and democratic nations of the West.

Since 2013, Putin has directed a campaign of political, economic, and military aggression against Ukraine.

In February 2014, the Russian military began the invasion of eastern regions in Ukraine, including the Crimean Peninsula. Their military equipped and supported separatist insurgents in the Donbass region, where fighting has killed over 14,000 people.

Today the world is witnessing the unprovoked aggression and invasion ordered by Vladimir Putin.

Putin and his accomplices must be held personally liable for the war crimes committed against the people of Ukraine.

Russia claims it is not attacking civilians. But that is a lie, as Russia has killed tens of thousands of Ukrainians, mostly from explosive weapons over a wide impact area, shelling from heavy artillery and multi-launch rocket systems, and missile and air strikes.

Families are being separated by war, adults and children are being ruthlessly killed, and a rogue Russia is violently crushing political speech from its own citizens who oppose the war.

Of all the victims of this irrational, immoral invasion, the most severe long-term effects are inflicted on Ukraine's children. Hundreds were killed, and many more children have been severely injured.

Many have been orphaned by Russian bombing of residences and gathering places, in addition to battlefield losses. Thousands have been traumatized by the fear and terror that missiles and bombs bring, with emotional and psychological wounds that are likely to last decades, if not for their entire lives.

Ukrainian children who escaped the carnage are also suffering. According to the United Nations and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, over 5.1 million Ukrainians have left Ukraine, about 40 percent are children, and over 2.9 million refugees from Ukraine have entered Poland since February 24, of whom [over] 90 percent are women and children.

They emphasized that the number of unaccompanied children is "distressingly high," and are largely going uncounted. Children who are orphaned or separated from their families are especially at risk of becoming victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation and abuse.

It is deplorable that children and their families' lives have been thrown into jeopardy by Putin's war crimes. All children, no matter their country's NATO status, deserve a stable, parented household in a safe community. They should never be victims of war, witnesses to atrocities, nor orphaned by war's toll, being left to navigate the remnants without their families.

Yet, all this is the reality for Ukraine's in-country and refugee children. They are scared and scarred, and a great number of them have no one to help them cope with the heart-breaking detritus of war.

Another tragedy stemming from this war is the vulnerability of women and girls to the deplorable system of human trafficking. Secretary General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres said, "For predators and human traffickers, the war in Ukraine is not a tragedy," "It's an opportunity—and women and children are the targets."

This is yet another reason this legislation must pass: to prevent women and girls from being subject to some of humanity's worst individuals.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support S. 3522 the Ukraine Democracy Lend-Lease Act to adequately support the Ukrainian forces against Russia unprovoked vicious attack on democracy.

The western world must continue to support Ukraine during their time of war.

I look forward to the briefing by Mr. Reznikov on his latest defense needs and requests.

HOMETOWN HERO—ROSE BRAZIEL

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Texas-24 Hometown

Hero of the week, Rose Braziel, CEO and founder of Hope 4 Kids.

Rose started Hope 4 Kids with the same values she has carried with her, her entire life: love, respect, and kindness. In doing so, she's provided underprivileged children in North Texas with food, clothes, and an important sense of community.

Rose's goal is to not only ensure kids in her community are properly taken care of today, but to inspire them to be leaders tomorrow. By providing an environment for boys and girls to learn leadership skills, teamwork building, and the importance of volunteering, the next generation of Texas-24 is well-equipped to lead us for years to come.

Rose's journey to develop and inspire future leaders was far from easy. After two strokes and various doctors telling her she wouldn't walk or talk again, Rose has displayed unmatched resiliency and defied all odds to continue her incredible efforts.

Her strength and dedication have helped countless students in need of a mentor and a friend. I thank Rose for always putting the next generation before herself and ensuring they are set up for success.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF
WORLD WAR II VETERAN, JOHN
DANIEL HARMON, SR.

HON. JEFF DUNCAN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor John Daniel Harmon, Sr., a 102-year-old World War II veteran from Saluda, South Carolina.

Mr. Harmon was born in 1919 in Saluda County on a small farm. Growing up during the Great Depression, Mr. Harmon learned the value of community, hard work, and being resourceful throughout his life. Mr. Harmon attended Hickory Grove School and was in the first class to graduate from the Hollywood School in 1937.

After finishing school, Mr. Harmon joined the Civilian Conservation Corps and worked several jobs before joining the U.S. Army during WWII. He served a tour of duty with Company B, 363rd Medical Battalion, 63rd Infantry Division as an ambulance driver. His division was among the first to cross the Siegfried Line. Mr. Harmon still remembers many of the battles he endured during his tour, and he is always willing to share his experiences of the Army.

For his service, he received several recognitions including the American Theater Ribbon, the European and Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with Two Battle Stars for Rhineland and Central Europe, the Combat Medical Badge, a Bronze Star, and the French Legion of Honor Medal.

After the war, Mr. Harmon returned to his hometown of Saluda where he eventually retired as a Superintendent with Eagle Construction Company. Mr. Harmon and his wife, Grace Gentry spent seventy years married and saw the growth of their family with five children, nine grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren with whom Mr. Harmon has celebrated many birthdays and holidays. He continues to be an active member of his church, Bethany United Methodist Church. Mr. Har-

mon still leads a highly active life, and he has not lost his wit, knowledge, or cheerful outlook. Mr. Harmon recently celebrated his 102nd birthday, making him among the oldest surviving World War II veterans in South Carolina.

The United States is blessed to have the finest troops and veterans in the history of the world, where so many heroes like Mr. Harmon are willing to put on our country's uniform in defense of our freedoms. I am confident that Mr. Harmon's lifetime of service to his country and community will continue to inspire many.

Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to be able to serve the Third District of South Carolina and to honor those who have dedicated their lives to protecting America's freedoms.

UKRAINE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM SUPPORT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H.R. 496, the Ukraine Religious Freedom Support Act, which will oppose religious freedom violations in Ukraine by Russia.

H.R. 496 the Ukraine Religious Freedom Support Act directs the President, when determining whether Russia is a country of particular concern for religious freedom under certain federal laws, to consider incidents occurring in the parts of Ukraine controlled by Russia or Russia-affiliated non-state groups.

Ukraine is a religiously rich country with 74 percent of people identifying as Orthodox, 10 percent Greek Catholic and the remainder identifying as Roman Catholic, Jewish and Protestant.

Ukraine has accused Russia of targeting historic monuments and cultural heritage sites. Damaging and destroying at least 59 religious sites across the country since its invasion began.

H.R. 496 will direct the president to consider incidents in the Russian controlled parts of Ukraine found by Congress.

Ukrainian groups targeted by Russia include Muslim Crimean Tatars, the Orthodox Church, the Greek Catholic Church, Protestant Christians, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Religious freedom violations against these groups consist of abductions, torture, imprisonment, property confiscation, vandalism, and banning of peaceful religious gatherings.

Russia is utilizing religious extremism to silence and arrest Ukrainians, including closing religious institutions that don't conform. Religious freedom violations have been key in Russia dismantling Ukrainian civil society.

Congress' findings state that international humanitarian law requires Russia to protect religious freedom in occupied territories. This includes illegal entities, such as Russia's illegal occupation of the Crimea Region.

In opposing violations of religious freedom, it is imperative that we consider the extreme religious injustices and restrictions Russia placed on the territories they have invaded in Ukraine.

Freedom to practice religion should be a protected right for every person, worldwide.

This bill will ensure the President considers these severe violations in Ukraine by Russia when determining Russia's threat to religious freedom.

I urge all members to join me in voting for H.R. 496, the Ukraine Religious Support Act.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE HARD
WORK AND INNOVATIVE THINK-
ING OF TEACHERS AND STAFF
AT MARY E. ROBERTS ELEMEN-
TARY SCHOOL

HON. ANDY KIM

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Mr. KIM of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the hard work and innovative thinking of teachers and staff at Mary E. Roberts Elementary School of Moorestown, New Jersey for taking steps to reduce their food waste.

Every year is the United States wastes more than 100 billion pounds of food, the equivalent of 130 billion meals. In New Jersey alone, one person on average throws away 325 pounds of food each year. Across the country, over \$408 billion dollars' worth of food is being thrown away each year, the need for new and innovative ways to reduce food waste has never been higher.

Knowing that their school had an important role to play in reducing and recycling food waste, teachers and paraprofessionals at Mary E. Roberts Elementary School took action. In 2019, the school received funding through the Sustainable Jersey for Schools grant to purchase equipment and hire instructors to explain to students how to sort their unopened and untouched food. These resources were instrumental in the launch of the "No Food Left Behind" program where left-over food and produce from the school's garden is collected and donated to local food pantries and animal hospitals.

The action taken by Mary E. Roberts Elementary School has inspired the community to proclaim yesterday, April 28, 2022, as Stop Food Waste Day and encourage others to learn about simple ways to minimize the impact of food waste.

Each of us believes that no one in the United States should go to bed hungry. The unfortunate reality is that, in New Jersey's Third District alone, more than 55,000 people, including 12,000 children, experience hunger. Programs such as "No Food Left Behind" are not only raising awareness playing a key role to raise awareness on food waste. I applaud all the staff, students, and volunteers at Mary E. Roberts Elementary School for showing us how we can all improve our communities, and I look forward to seeing more schools across the country follow their lead.

HOMETOWN HERO—KHEN HOIH

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Khen Hoihi of Irving, Texas,

whose inspiring story displays the type of community North Texas has to offer.

Despite being born without the lower half of his left arm, Khen has always dreamed of following in his brother's footsteps by playing in his school's orchestra. As his teachers put it, "he's never let anything hold him back."

This dream was recently made possible by the ingenuity of several Nimitz High School engineering students, who took their lessons from class to tirelessly fashion a musical prosthetic for Khen.

After months of work and his new prosthetic dawned, Khen miraculously played the violin for his peers, parents, and teachers at a recent school board meeting.

Khen's dedication and passion for music proved that against all odds, anything is possible.

I thank Khen for inspiring us to reach for our goals—no matter the obstacles we may face. I also thank the brilliant students who made his dream become a reality. His creativity and compassion for others is a wonderful reflection of the spirit of Texas-24.

TRANSATLANTIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECURITY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3344 the Transatlantic Telecommunications Security Act to direct the Department of State and other federal agencies to help Central and Eastern European countries improve the security of their telecommunications networks.

To support eligible projects, the State Department shall provide diplomatic and political support and encourage international financial institutions to provide investment support.

This bill will strengthen national security cooperation by securing 5G development with our key allies and partners in Central and Eastern Europe.

In recent years, the United States and our allies have defeated increased threats from China and Russia that seek to expand their spheres of influence and undermine democratic institutions.

Recently, European countries have felt significant pressure to use Huawei 5G equipment, a state-linked Chinese information and communications technology company, giving China the ability to compromise allied critical telecommunications infrastructure.

5G networks are crucial to artificial intelligence platforms, which in the future will introduce immense national security and domestic economic implications.

Secure telecommunications are also critical for military interoperability with our European allies at a time when NATO coordination is needed now more than ever.

Given these critical national security needs, the United States must provide our allies an alternative to Chinese financing and provide increased diplomatic support to ensure secure telecommunications lines.

For this reason, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3344 the Transatlantic Telecommunications Security Act.

HONORING MR. GORDON
HARGROVE

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Gordon Hargrove, a community advocate who has spent his career fighting to deliver basic services to the most vulnerable people in Worcester, Massachusetts.

In 1957, while attending Worcester State College, Mr. Hargrove began working as part-time staff at the multi-service neighborhood center, the Friendly House. Over the course of 65 years, Mr. Hargrove worked from his position as a volunteer at the Friendly House to the role of Executive Director, in which he has served for 52 years. During this time, Mr. Hargrove has used his passion and knowledge to fortify the Friendly House as an important service provider to Worcester's immigrant and low-income communities.

Mr. Hargrove played an integral role in securing funding for the construction of the main Friendly House building, which allowed for collaborative projects with family shelters across Central Massachusetts. In the 70s, he helped coordinate providing services to families with behavioral issues and advocated for health insurance providers to fund mental health services. Mr. Hargrove also spearheaded a program to provide meals to elders—making the Friendly House the first shelter in Worcester to do so. Today, most community service sites offer elder meal programs, undoubtedly due to the work of the Friendly House and Mr. Hargrove's leadership.

Madam Speaker, the impact of Mr. Hargrove's advocacy cannot be understated. Countless people have had food on their tables, roofs over their heads, and a job to go to everyday because of the services provided by the Friendly House and the community-based solutions Mr. Hargrove has championed. There has never been a problem too big to take on or a family he didn't try to help. For over half a century, Mr. Hargrove has led the Friendly House with nothing but compassion and goodness in his heart. He has devoted his professional life to being of service to others and the community.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress and all the people whose lives were changed for the better because of Mr. Hargrove's work, it is my great privilege to congratulate Mr. Gordon Hargrove on his retirement, and to thank him for his tireless efforts to create a more equitable world.

RECOGNIZING GUAM'S AUTISM COMMUNITY TOGETHER IN CELEBRATION OF APRIL 2022 AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

HON. MICHAEL F. Q. SAN NICOLAS

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Autism Awareness Month. During this month of April 2022, we take the time to recognize our autism commu-

nity while reflecting on the ways we can improve our efforts to foster awareness, cultivate acceptance, and facilitate change for individuals and families affected by autism. I would like to further commend Guam's Autism Community Together (ACT) for their continued leadership in advancing these very priorities both over the past month and year-round.

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a complex, life-long developmental disability that can cause significant social, emotional, communication, and behavioral challenges. It is the fastest-growing developmental disability in the United States, with a prevalence that has risen from 1 in 125 children in 2010 to 1 in 54 in 2020. This disorder affects more than 70 million people worldwide, and in Guam, 273 students within the Guam Department of Education have autism. However, this number does not include hundreds of others on our island who are adults, students outside of the public school system, and those that may be undiagnosed.

The entire world has shared in over two years of innumerable challenges imposed by COVID-19, but it is of the utmost importance that we do not let this hinder us from extending compassion and care to others. Groups like the autism community face a unique set of obstacles that have been exacerbated by the global pandemic, and it is critical that we remain steadfast in actively working to improve the quality of life for individuals with autism and their families. Over the years, we have made strides in increasing autism awareness, but much more lies ahead for us to accomplish. Part of this work includes a commitment to bridging the gap between mindful awareness and meaningful action. With a collective effort to drive the movement forward by connecting the two, we can simultaneously break down stigmas and build a society which accepts and appreciates all people. Moreover, by supplementing awareness with more opportunities in education, employment, accessible housing, affordable health care, and comprehensive long-term services, we can ensure that people with autism have the tools to live fully in all areas of life.

ACT has tirelessly advocated for these objectives since 2004, and this year, they have admirably brought the 2022 theme, "Every Piece Matters—Accept & Support Autism," to life with various events and projects for the entire island community to participate in. Namely, they hosted an Autism Awareness Wave and Parade, their annual Autism Awareness Fair, a Funtastic Park Day, a Family Duck Ride Adventure, Movie Day, Bowling Day, 2K/5K Sunset GLOW Run, and a Mass of Thanksgiving. They are also scheduled to host a Golf Tournament today and have maintained a vital platform for our local legislature and administration to recognize the autism community.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to reflect upon the importance of coming together as a community and supporting those who have been affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder. Moreover, I am humbled to serve in pursuit of a more inclusive society which fosters understanding and celebrates our differences. On behalf of the people of Guam, I thank Autism Community Together as well as other non-profit organizations, government agencies, service providers, support vendors, and community partners across the island who are committed to providing the information, resources, programs, and services necessary for

meeting the unique needs of our autism community. I look forward to their future contributions and the change we can affect for individuals and families in Guam and throughout the Nation.

PROTECTING SEMICONDUCTOR
SUPPLY CHAIN MATERIALS
FROM AUTHORITARIANS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H.R. 7372, the Protecting Semiconductor Supply Chain Materials from Authoritarians.

H.R. 7372 will require the President to establish a semiconductor supply chain working group and submit to Congress reports on potential disruptions to the supply chain.

We must always ensure that geopolitical dynamics do not impede or disrupt the United States' semiconductor supply.

Semiconductors were first developed in the United States for transmitter use. Since then, the industry has boomed with the creation of various types of Semiconductors that are used in everything from computers to cars, and from watches to washing machines.

Large semiconductor companies such as Intel and Texas Instruments rely on certain minerals to maintain manufacturing demands.

These threatened materials include palladium, neon gas, helium, and C4F6, which are necessary for the operation of electronic devices.

Semiconductors are essential to the American economy and day to day American life. A semiconductor shortage is a threat to National Security.

We need to plan ahead and anticipate the potential impact that Russia and other autocratic, authoritarian regimes may have on these supplies.

This bill will require the Secretary of State to submit a report analyzing Russia's impact on supply chains and the global economy while also recommending potential steps to bolster semiconductor production and secure necessary materials.

Taiwan is the world's largest supplier of semiconductors, so it is important to account for any geopolitical factors that might impact them. The bill requires these considerations in future reports as well as issues with health and natural disasters.

Through this report, Congress can stay updated for threats to the global supply chain for semiconductors and prepare for future geopolitical developments.

I urge all members to join me in voting for H.R. 7372, the Protecting Semiconductor Supply Chain Materials from Authoritarians.

IN HONOR OF THE EXTRAORDINARY
CAREER OF ART FRANKLIN, CBS
42 NEWS ANCHOR IN BIRMINGHAM, AL

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 29, 2022

Ms. SEWELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the leadership and extraordinary accomplishments of Art Franklin, who is stepping down from his position as co-lead anchor of the CBS 42 Evening News on April 29, 2022.

A native of Detroit, Art is a graduate of the University of Michigan. Upon completing his education, he began his broadcasting career at the WDZZ-FM 93 radio station in Flint, Michigan, before leaving to join the WILX-TV 10, the NBC station in Lansing, Michigan. While at WILX, Art worked as a Capital Reporter and Business Reporter becoming the first African American male in Lansing to regularly anchor a broadcast newscast.

Continuing to work within the NBC network, Art transitioned to WAVY-TV 10 in Norfolk, Virginia, where he served as the station's military affairs correspondent and anchor of the Bottom Line, the station's public service program. In addition to regularly reporting from the Pentagon, Art also began covering international assignments traveling to Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Bahrain, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and the Caribbean. As a trailblazer in broadcast journalism, Art continued to make history upon moving to Birmingham in 1991, becoming Birmingham's first primetime African American male anchor during his 12 years at WBRC-TV. Throughout his career, Art reported on major world events such as the conflict in the Persian Gulf, the 9-11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City, and the terrorist attack at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. He also transitioned to political reporting, covering several United States presidents, including Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama.

Leaving Birmingham in 2003, Art moved to Atlanta joining another NBC affiliate, WXIA 11 Alive News, before becoming an anchor at WAGA-TV FOX5. Though he left television to start a Public Relations firm, Art's passion and dedication to his craft brought him back to Birmingham to launch the CBS 42 Morning News with Art Franklin. While at CBS 42, Art has served as a managing editor and as anchor of the 4:00 P.M., 5:00 P.M., 6:00 P.M., and 10:00 P.M. newscast.

For over three decades, Art has immersed himself in the world of journalism, serving in exclusive positions such as the producer of the National Association of Black Journalists Awards show, which aired on Black Entertainment Television (BET) and guest journalism instructor at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Diversifying his career outside of journalism, Art has served as the C.E.O. of 285 Records, an Atlanta based independent record company; background actor for multiple award-winning television shows including How to Get Away with Murder and Greys Anatomy. He is also the author of the book Give It All You Got and the founder of the Art Franklin Collection, a clothing line of male clothing, accessories, and custom suits. As a vibrant member of his

community, his civic affiliations include board member of the Jefferson County Family Resource Center and member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Art has received over 100 community and journalism awards for his exemplary career and contributions to the journalism profession, including most notably, an Emmy Award for Outstanding Achievement for spotnews coverage in Atlanta in 2005, and most recently an Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Innovation as anchor of CBS 42's Coronavirus House Calls in 2021. Art is also the recipient of the Outstanding Achievement Television Programming Excellence Award in 1995, Scripps Howard Excellence in Journalism Award in 1994, RTNDA Best Documentary in 1994, and Alabama Associated Press Award for the Best Documentary in 1994, and Best Reporter in 1995. Securing his place in history as one of the best news anchors of a generation, in 2017, Art was named Alabama's Best News Anchor by the Alabama Broadcasting Association. In 2019, the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Silver Circle recognized him for over 25 years in the industry.

On a personal note, Art has always been the consummate professional. His mere presence on air has been a source of great inspiration for little black boys and girls in Alabama. Art delivers the news with clarity and purpose which has made him my "go-to" anchor for the nightly news. We will miss him on CBS 42, but I know that Art will continue to make significant contributions to our community. I congratulate Art, and extend best wishes in all of his future endeavors.

On behalf of Alabama's 7th Congressional District, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the extraordinary career of Art Franklin and his exemplary contributions to broadcast journalism.

COUNTERING MALIGN RUSSIAN
ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 7311, the Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Act, which requires the Department of State to report to Congress a strategy and implementation plan outlining U.S. efforts to counter Russia's malign influence and activities in Africa.

This bill directs the Secretary of State to develop and submit to Congress a strategy and implementation plan outlining United States efforts to counter the malign influence and activities of the Russian Federation and its proxies in Africa.

Russia has been aggressively pursuing its strategic objectives in Africa in recent years by:

- securing a foothold in the eastern Mediterranean,
- gaining naval port access in the Red Sea,
- expanding natural resource extraction opportunities,
- displacing Western influence,
- and promoting alternatives to democracy as a regional norm.

A report from the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change shows how Russia is reviving

Soviet-era ties with African states to extract resources from the region, and in exchange, become a security provider.

Russia has a vested interest in the deployment of private military contractors (PMCs) in the region.

Instead of bringing peace, Russia is thriving on instability in African states and among Africa's leadership.

Africa is home to some of the fast-growing economies in the world and is abundant in natural resources.

With the U.S. and French military draw-down in Africa, Russia is looking to prove itself as an alternative.

Its deployment to Mali in December 2021 demonstrated the rapid support Moscow can offer struggling regimes, however Russia is also influencing from within.

Since Putin's embrace of the region in the last decade, political strategists have been sent to African governments, including those

of the Central African Republic (CAR) and Madagascar, to counsel their leaders.

The funding of pro-Russian television channels in Africa and electoral interference are other methods to sway sentiment among Africans.

The growing tendency to request PMC support for mounting security challenges, as Russian influence increases among African societies, is a clear indicator of a deepening authoritarian footprint on the continent.

It seems that African countries are viewed by Russia cynically as vehicles for accrual of geostrategic advantage and exploitation rather than as partners for legitimate economic investment for trade or security assistance.

The "partnerships" that Russia seeks in Africa are not state based, but elite based.

By helping these often illegitimate and unpopular leaders to retain power, Russia is cementing Africa's indebtedness to Moscow.

Russia's engagements are inherently destabilizing for the citizens of African countries, resulting in stunted economic development, human rights abuses, disenfranchisement of African citizens, the perpetuation of illegitimate governments, and social polarization.

African stability is not a priority for Russia, as it is largely pursued on a patron-client basis with compromised African leaders.

Russia's unofficial strategy runs counter to the interests of many African citizens.

We must work more closely with African members of the UN Security Council so that shared interests of security and development are advanced at these international assemblies.

I ask my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 7311 because the United States can help Africa become less of a permissive environment for Russian imperialism.

It is imperative that we try to help save African stability, sovereignty, and democracy.