

I also ask that you pray for my community on this 11th anniversary of the shooting at Sandy Hook, for the families, for the people who live there, for the town of Newtown, who will forever be bound by their grief.

RECOGNIZING THE WALSH JESUIT GIRLS SOCCER TEAM

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

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the Walsh Jesuit High School girls soccer team as Ohio 13's Congressional District Champion of the Week.

Last month, the Walsh Jesuit Warriors girls soccer team won their first Ohio High School Athletic Association Division I State championship since 2016.

After a hard-fought game, the Warriors overcame Olentangy Liberty 2-1. This win cements Walsh Jesuit's status as a soccer powerhouse with their 11th State title win since the year 2000.

The program holds the record for the most girls soccer State titles in Ohio, and their win is just more proof as to why Ohio's 13th Congressional District is the birthplace of champions.

This victory is not only a major accomplishment for these hardworking student athletes but also for their coaches, parents, and entire community that supported them along the way.

Congratulations again to the incredible Walsh Jesuit girls soccer team. I can't wait to see how you dominate on and off the pitch.

REMEMBERING THE ISRAELI HOSTAGES

(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, I met with families of Israeli hostages because it was important to hear their stories. While listening, there was deep pain and even moments of tears. These families continue carrying burdens no one should have to bear.

It has been over 2 months. These families are missing their loved ones and expressed a strong desire that we continue prioritizing their return. There are significant concerns about the rapidly deteriorating conditions of those who are still held captive. While life seems to continue for so many right now, empty seats remain at their tables.

Personally, I take this moment to thank those working around the clock for their safe return. Your tireless work provides unwavering hope.

The resilience of the families is a testament to the human spirit.

FAREWELL TO SPEAKER EMERITUS KEVIN MCCARTHY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FINSTAD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials.

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

There was no objection.

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

As the Dean of California's Republican delegation, it is my honor and privilege to come to the floor of the people's House to recognize someone from the Golden State who has made a historic impact on this institution.

KEVIN MCCARTHY is not from one of California's world-famous cities. He hails from the blue-collar city of Bakersfield. KEVIN is not the son of politicians or corporate titans. He is the son of a firefighter.

His story is an American story. He is the grandson of an Italian immigrant. From staffer to Speaker, he has devoted the better part of his life to the House of Representatives.

In politics, nothing is handed to you. That certainly holds true in this town and in this building. KEVIN's success is the result of hard work and determination. KEVIN is a fighter. Time and time again, he fought for his constituents, his State, his conference, and his country.

The first sign of KEVIN's go-get-em attitude was when, at the age of 19, he started his own small business selling sandwiches. While attending college at Cal State Bakersfield, KEVIN got interested in politics, took a job working for our former colleague, former chairman of the Ways and Means Committee Bill Thomas. For the next 15 years, he worked as a congressional aid and ultimately served as a district director for Congressman Thomas.

In 2000, KEVIN stepped forward as a candidate for the first time and was elected as a Kern Community College District trustee. Just a couple years later, in 2002, he was elected to the California State Assembly. After just one term in the Assembly, he was chosen to serve as the minority leader.

Upon retirement of Mr. Thomas, KEVIN was elected, in 2006, to follow in the footsteps of his former boss here in the House. As a freshman, KEVIN was appointed to serve on the Republican Steering Committee.

From those early days in the House until today, KEVIN has been a strong and effective advocate on a number of important issues.

Water is the lifeline of the Central Valley in California. In California, we

have a saying: "Whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting." KEVIN approached the issue of water with his characteristic optimism that brought anyone together who wanted to find real solutions.

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California has a proud history of being at the forefront of aeronautics and space exploration, including the region KEVIN has represented. He has been a champion for recognizing that past and investing in the future.

Our State is a leader in innovation, and KEVIN has always been a vocal promoter of industries that will shape our economy and America's competitive edge in the years ahead.

Here in the House, we have seen KEVIN answer the call to lead time and time again—as chief deputy whip, majority whip, majority leader, minority leader, and then, ultimately, Speaker. KEVIN has consistently led the charge for our Conference and conservative priorities. During some difficult times, KEVIN was always the calm in the storm, levelheaded and positive.

Republicans would not be in the majority here today without KEVIN's tireless work and leadership. To say he will be missed is an understatement. Our loss is his wife Judy's gain. I wish his family, including his son, Connor, and his daughter, Meghan, the very best as we head into the holidays and the next chapter of his life.

As I mentioned earlier, KEVIN is from Bakersfield. He is probably the second most famous person to hail from Bakersfield. Country music legend Merle Haggard has had him beat for that top spot. A few years back, KEVIN introduced and passed a bill renaming the Bakersfield post office in honor of Merle Haggard.

As we join here today to celebrate another son of Bakersfield whose journey in the House is coming to an end, it seems fitting that Merle had a song titled "If We Make It Through December." In that song, Merle sings:

If we make it through December
Got plans to be in a warmer town come summertime
Maybe even California
If we make it through December, we'll be fine.

KEVIN, I have no doubt that warmer days await. I am grateful for your service, your friendship, and your leadership. You will continue to make your mark, and I look forward to the many great things to come.

Until then, farewell, my friend. God bless, and I know I will see you soon.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mrs. STEEL).

Mrs. STEEL. Mr. Speaker, this is a bittersweet moment.

I am grateful to have the opportunity to stand on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, an institution shaped by years of Speaker KEVIN MCCARTHY's faithful leadership. I thank and honor him for his service to the people of our State and to our

country. I am also sad to be saying farewell.

I have known Speaker MCCARTHY as a staffer, State legislator, Congressman, whip, majority leader, and Speaker of the House. Like many of us, he supported me and built me up to where I am today. I am most proud to know him as a mentor and friend.

One of his greatest strengths is that he listens. He gets to know his Members and plays to each of their individual strengths to create a winning team. His work for our home State and for our country has been invaluable.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful beyond words to have been a member of his majority and to have fought with him to better the lives of Californians and all of our fellow Americans.

You will always be my friend. Thank you for everything you have done for me and for the country.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the ancient Greeks would have appreciated the irony of this story. KEVIN MCCARTHY spent his life preparing for the job that he held for just 269 days. For decades, he devoted all his energies and skills to building one of the most formidable political organizations of our time that ultimately took back the House last year.

In those 269 days as Speaker, despite the most slender of majorities, and with Democrats controlling the Senate and White House, he cut \$2 trillion of spending over the next decade. He forestalled the hiring of an army of IRS agents. He curtailed the woke policies plaguing our Armed Forces. He averted a government shutdown in a dangerous world.

He reopened the Capitol to the American people. He launched historical investigations into government corruption. He produced the strongest border security measure in a century and landmark legislation to restore American energy independence.

On his 269th day as Speaker, he enjoyed the overwhelming support and confidence of his Republican colleagues. He was completing the process of adopting the most conservative appropriations bills in decades. He had put House Republicans in a commanding position to sweep the 2024 election. National polls recorded that he had become the most popular elected official in America.

His speakership ended on that day. It did not end because of the Republican Conference. It ended because of eight sad and pathetic mediocrities nursing petty personal grudges. As Shakespeare said: "This house is turned upside down since Robin Ostler died."

This is not the end of the tale. History commands, and we must obey. Soon, KEVIN MCCARTHY will be called back to the national stage to play a vital and leading role in a command performance by history to save our beloved country.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Mr. CALVERT, for leading this appropriate time here today.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I come forward to be part of this. It is also with optimism because I have known KEVIN for 21 years, and he was always and is always the optimistic one in the room. He always sees what we can do.

He always sees the vision for each of us as elected Representatives and, more importantly, the country. He always thinks of the country. He always thinks how we are going to better the institution, whether it was in the California State Assembly as we were cutting our teeth in politics there or here on this national and international stage.

Mr. Speaker, I am somber right now because what has happened really is a waste, as my good friend and colleague, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, mentioned. There were only 269 days of what could have been a really great thing.

KEVIN will be part of everything we do in a different form and in a different venue because he still loves and cares about this country. He still is a great friend to his colleagues, even though he exits this area for a time.

I am grateful to him for his friendship. Anything I have ever asked, he has always helped in his leadership role for me as a Member in either one of the bodies, the State Assembly or here. He is always optimistic and has a smile. He has a lot of funny stories to go with it that I can't tell here.

He has always reached out to our families, making sure they are included. He always thinks of everybody. He is an amazing talent and will go far in leading his next enterprise, which is going to be based on our values and making our country stronger yet again. We will get there.

I am proud to call him a friend. I hope I can always have his friendship, his guidance, and his playing a major role as we go forward in saving and strengthening our great country.

KEVIN MCCARTHY, I thank you for everything you have ever done for me, and for all of us, as a friend. I am blessed to know you.

To Judy, Connor, and Meghan, the sacrifice has been big, but we are always very grateful. My family understands that, as well. God bless you.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. OBERNOLTE).

Mr. OBERNOLTE. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to be here to thank my friend and former Speaker, KEVIN MCCARTHY, for his service to this country and to our Conference.

I had the experience of getting to know KEVIN when I first decided to run for Congress. I got a call from my predecessor alerting me that he would announce the next day that he was not running for reelection. I had to quite

suddenly make the decision about whether or not I wanted to run for Congress.

I got a call from KEVIN, and KEVIN said: Jay, I believe in you. You can do it. I will help you. And he did.

Once I was elected and sworn in as a Member of the House of Representatives, I was shocked to discover that I was 1 of over 100 Members of this Chamber who could say that of KEVIN. There were over 100 Members who KEVIN had given the confidence to step up and serve their country. KEVIN and I subsequently became good friends.

What I discovered about his leadership style is that it is a leadership style that I think I honor the most, that of servant leader. Every decision that KEVIN makes and has made as leader was not for his own self-aggrandizement or his own betterment. The decisions that he made served the interests of the people who he led, the Conference, his constituents, and the Members of this Chamber.

He also exhibited a quality that I think is unfortunately pretty rare in public servants, that of humility. KEVIN is an amazingly humble man. If you met him on the street, you would never guess that he was third in line to the Presidency.

Mr. Speaker, I will share a story, and KEVIN probably doesn't even remember that this happened. Earlier this year, I was giving a constituent and their family a tour of the Capitol. They were here in D.C. They had a couple of children with them. I was showing them the rotunda when KEVIN came bustling out of his office, surrounded by a whole group of people. You could tell he was on his way somewhere important.

He saw me and stopped. All of his people were saying: KEVIN, we have to go. We have to go. He stopped, walked over, and asked to be introduced to my constituents. He insisted on taking a picture with them in the rotunda. I will tell you, that made not just their day but their entire trip. They still talk to me about it. KEVIN would do that for any Member of this Chamber.

It has been an incredible honor to serve under his leadership. I have no doubt that the future is bright for my friend, KEVIN MCCARTHY, and that we can expect even more great things in the future.

KEVIN, I thank you for your leadership. I am excited to learn about what the future holds for you.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER), the Republican whip.

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, no one has worked harder to help House Republicans win back the majority and deliver on our conservative, common-sense agenda than KEVIN MCCARTHY.

As the son of a firefighter, KEVIN learned the values of grit, determination, and courage early in life. Throughout his years here in Washington as a Congressman, whip, majority leader, and our 55th Speaker of the House, it was those values that made

him one of the most fierce fighters for Republican priorities ever.

I had the privilege of serving on KEVIN's leadership team this Congress. I have seen him work tirelessly to ensure House Republicans delivered on our promises to the American people. I have seen him listen to and work with Members across every sector of our Conference to bring forward viable solutions. I have seen him do the right thing, no matter the cost. He truly believes in the greatness of this country and this institution.

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I will be brutally honest. I usually am. It was hard to watch as things played out the way they did. KEVIN MCCARTHY did not deserve any of that treatment, but no matter what, he has always risen above the fold, handled every situation with grace, and put whatever is in the best interests of America first.

I thank KEVIN for his leadership. It has been an honor to serve alongside him. Jacquie and I are rooting for him always, and we wish him nothing but the best in whatever comes next.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM).

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative CALVERT for his leadership and for yielding.

I rise to honor and thank Speaker KEVIN MCCARTHY who is a selfless and amazing leader and who is always optimistic about his service in Congress which has left a lasting impact on his community, our States, our party, and our country.

KEVIN has had my back since I first decided to run for Congress, and he has encouraged me every single step of the way. He has worked tirelessly to make our party look more like America, and the gains we have made in the past 5 years are a testament to that.

KEVIN has been committed to ensuring people like me and each of us in our conference have what it takes to be effective Members for our districts. He is the reason we have a House majority today.

I always say the GOP is the grand opportunity party, and that is because of Members like KEVIN, who are committed to promoting commonsense policies to get our country back on track, make life more affordable, keep our communities safe, and protect the American Dream.

I thank KEVIN. I wish him the best in the next chapter. I know he is just getting started because I know he never gives up.

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from California (Mr. CALVERT) for hosting this Special Order for a special friend.

KEVIN MCCARTHY's relentless perseverance, keen insights, and unmatched knowledge of the personalities of the

House were amazing to witness firsthand.

While the public saw the 15 rounds of votes in January and the historic spending cuts of the Fiscal Responsibility Act, privately, what I got to see was the legislative equivalent of an elite power athlete expertly working people, process, and policy to get the best outcome in this Chamber. It was truly an expertise that he had honed over his service in the California State Assembly and here in Congress to make this place work.

It takes a legislative craftsman to make an institution like this work. It takes history, it takes training, it takes focused energy, and it takes will, perseverance and grit. I got to see all those things in KEVIN.

Now, everybody else got to see the sunny optimism, the personalities that he loved embracing, and his spirit of friendship with people he had just met. That was wonderful to see. However, to see him behind the scenes being able to put all these disparate talents and gifts that he has to work for public policy was awesome. It was a special thing to work with KEVIN.

In the wildest moments this Chamber has seen in decades, he was a great leader for House Republicans, for this institution, and for America. He had coolness, calm, and a sense of charity for folks, even if they were not going to reciprocate. As a public leader, he truly lived his values, and the way he treated us is the way that he expected others to treat everyone else.

He was a great Speaker. Success after success after success took place this whole year when Republicans in Washington are outnumbered by a Democrat Senate and a Democrat in the White House. With a very narrow majority we got big things done. It is a tough thing.

He had an innate sense of optimism. He always found an opportunity to see the bright side of any moment. Even in the darkest of days, he saw something there that would give us a sense of hope and optimism. Those qualities are what has got him through an incredible career and a really incredible life.

He is a political mastermind as well. It wasn't just policy in here that he understood how to engineer. It was the architecture of campaigns, elections, and all the stuff that goes into modern campaigns that he was an expert in. There was no one better for Republicans and no one better in America who had his capacity to put things together and to win elections.

The American people and this institution are worse off for not having KEVIN MCCARTHY here. Nevertheless, I know he will be just fine. He will be just fine. I look forward to seeing what he has in store for himself, his family, and for this country. I look forward to his new way of contributing to make this place better and to make the country better.

I love working with KEVIN on technology issues. His engagement there

was the most spirited and the most interesting for both of us. His innovation initiative from a couple Congresses ago and his deep, keen interest in public policy as it relates to technology and the use of technology will have a lasting impact here, as well. I hope KEVIN will continue to contribute in that arena.

For us, this institution is worse off for not having KEVIN MCCARTHY here. It is worse off.

It is with a bit of sadness that I have to say farewell to my dear friend here on the House floor, but not farewell forever because he is a dear friend and will always be one of my dear friends.

KEVIN, we will miss you, and we love you.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. DUARTE).

Mr. DUARTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman CALVERT for this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank, admire, and pay respect to my good friend, Speaker KEVIN MCCARTHY.

For many years I supported candidates, many of the men I admire here and many of the ladies. I did fundraisers, and they came to my house. KEVIN was one of them.

When this race came up where I decided to run for Congress, I looked to the example of KEVIN MCCARTHY, and I said: America is about to turn socialist. If I don't step up and work alongside KEVIN MCCARTHY to win this seat, to win this critical majority today, then I may grow old in a socialist country for lack of my own efforts and for lack of seeing the inspiration and responding to the tireless work of Speaker KEVIN MCCARTHY, who is a dear friend of mine and a dear friend of many.

I know in the years to come when—however far forward it is—when I talk about my time in Congress, the conversation will quickly go to an American hero, KEVIN MCCARTHY, who tirelessly and successfully worked to stop socialism in America by winning this critical majority here in Congress.

I thank KEVIN for our freedom, his leadership, and I thank him for his friendship. I wish the best to him in the future. I will be here in Congress while he does his thing, and I am happy to see it.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO).

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, this is not a speech I ever wanted to give. I have had the honor of serving in office now for a number of years, and even during my time in the State legislature my district has always bordered KEVIN MCCARTHY's. He was in Congress, and I was in State. When I had the honor of being elected to this body, I served alongside him for a number of years now.

To say that he hasn't played a role in my ability to be here or my success here, yes, I wouldn't be here without

him. The policies we have been championing for a number of years would never have existed and would have never come to fruition if it wasn't for KEVIN MCCARTHY. We wouldn't have been able to change some of the things in the Valley that have been so positive for us if it wasn't for KEVIN MCCARTHY.

It is a sad day for us as an institution and a sad day for us in the Valley when we have all these different issues we are dealing with across the country, across this body, and across even the Central Valley in my home, we have got so much we need to still do, and the reality that he is not going to be there is a huge hole for us in the Valley.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at his time in service, understanding the policies that affect us, if it was something like water, we wouldn't have the WIIN Act if it wasn't for KEVIN MCCARTHY. We are seeing some of the results of that as we speak today.

The expansion or the repairs in the Friant-Kern Canal, being able to move water south through the delta so that our farmers and our communities can survive, projects that are being funded as we speak to expand and add water infrastructure for the Valley would not be in existence if it wasn't for KEVIN MCCARTHY.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at valley fever, a thing that we are dealing with that we are fighting, we still don't have enough research at the Valley Fever Institute, or the ability to have those policies in place or at least the research started so we can create some real solutions for a thing that we are dealing with across the country now.

Energy, as we all know, Kern County is a huge hub for energy production and to have a champion like we did—or we do today not much longer—in Congress like KEVIN MCCARTHY for energy production to make sure we continue to provide energy for our country to succeed, we are losing that voice.

As far as fire and forestry, I served in Congress under different Speakers. There are not a lot of times I have been in a situation where I am on a codel serving with my colleagues with a bipartisan group or at a press conference here on the Hill with a bipartisan group of Members talking about the same issues with a Speaker of the House. I honestly can't think of one situation where I have seen that happen, other than when it was KEVIN MCCARTHY and our Save Our Sequoias Act. I remember standing there looking around thinking: I don't think I have ever seen any other person and I still can't remember—but that is something that affects votes.

Mr. Speaker, when you think about the air quality and the impact it has on the Central Valley and the burning that has destroyed our mountain ranges, to have a piece of legislation championed by a Speaker and being able to get bipartisan support, that was something that I was very proud to be a part of.

The fun part was talking trash while playing basketball when I outscored him on the basketball court in the charity game. I think I made one basket, and he might have made zero. I am not sure. As far as shooting, I know I kicked his butt. I saw the picture of the scorecard at some of our charity events that we do in the Valley.

There are a lot of opportunities for us to do good things and have some fun together. Some of the most memorable moments are going to be this past year sitting in ELC and watching him across the table, his understanding of the policy itself, the dynamics of the votes, what is going to be able to pass the Senate, how to get the President engaged, and all those different things, we were able to have some real successes this year, to actually have a plan in place to solve real problems that now people who voted to take him out seem to acknowledge that that plan was probably our best option.

We are on the verge of losing that. It is something we are going to miss out on. To fill those shoes, to have that person who understands enough of this place and who understands how to make a change, how to implement those changes, and how to execute a plan is something that we are going to struggle with to fill.

I wish this day wasn't here. I wish he would stick around. Nevertheless, obviously, I know he is off to bigger and better things. I know we will still have plenty of opportunities for me to talk trash and make fun of him and maybe outscore him on the basketball court again if he is not too out of shape, but he is getting close to that point.

I just want to say thank you to KEVIN and to his family. Judy has been a huge asset to my family. His children have been a huge inspiration for my kids as they go through some of the same headaches that all of our children of people in this position have to deal with.

I thank KEVIN for everything he has done and will continue to do. Hopefully, we will have opportunities to work together soon in some situations.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, we spend a lot of time in this House focusing on that which we disagree on. I think if we spent more time focusing on what we have been able to do together and agree on, we would be a better House.

So I rise not to talk about the disagreements that the Speaker and I had, we had many differences, we are of different parties, and we had different perspectives, but I rise and thank Speaker MCCARTHY for that on which we could agree, because when we could agree, he took that opportunity to act upon that agreement.

It was good for the House, it was good for the country, and it was good for me.

So I thank KEVIN for what we agreed upon and what we were able to do together here and abroad to try to bring us together, try to lift us up, and try to make sure that when we could work together we did work together.

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It is an example that we ought to follow because it was a positive example.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CALVERT for giving me the opportunity to come to this floor as a former majority leader, as a partisan Democrat, to say and recognize the work that Speaker MCCARTHY did to try to, when we could, move forward in agreement in a positive, constructive way. Good luck and Godspeed.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. KILEY).

Mr. KILEY. Mr. Speaker, as a freshman Member, I haven't had as much time to work with Speaker Emeritus MCCARTHY as some of my colleagues have, but I am grateful for this year, working with him as part of the California delegation. Just observing his leadership of the Conference and of the House has really been something to behold.

I think it is clear to everyone that he is a once-in-a-generation political talent. The millions of things that you have to do, large and small, to build a majority, to manage the Conference, to run the House, to exercise leadership on the national and international stage, he made it look effortless and was always cheerful in the way he went about it.

I think that everyone in this House and across the country, whatever their politics, recognize that he is someone who is a leader in a way that transcends whatever position he holds, even a position as high as Speaker of the House of Representatives.

When I think about what he has meant to this institution, I think about the famous essay by Max Weber, "Politics is a Vocation," where he talks about the need to both have principles, but also to have a sense of responsibility when you are in the political arena; that this isn't just a philosophy class.

I think Speaker Emeritus MCCARTHY really embodies that sense of political leadership, of being firmly grounded in your principles, but also having an appreciation for the consequences of our actions and the unique responsibilities that we have when it comes to exercising political power.

It was also a great benefit to have a Californian leading this House. I know that KEVIN understands, as well as anyone, the challenges we face in California. I know that he and our delegation will continue to be a check there. I know he will continue to be in the fight to turn around California and this country.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Speaker MCCARTHY for his service, which will be felt by this institution for a very long time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, for me it is a sad day to come to this House floor. When I think of all the battles on this House floor over the better part of a decade that I have been a part of and witnessing the leadership of KEVIN MCCARTHY, I have to flip Shakespeare on his head today.

Mr. MCCARTHY loves the House of Commons and he loves this House of Representatives, and so we are two nations, of course, separated by a common language. It seems like it would be good to quote The Bard. I come to this House floor to praise MCCARTHY, not bury him, because Speaker Emeritus MCCARTHY has many years of leadership, decades of leadership ahead, not only at home, not only here in America, but around the world because of his leadership exhibited in this House.

As Shakespeare talked about, he, too, has suffered the slings and arrows that life brings in the public world, in politics, in this Capitol, in this House, but he has handled those every single day with grace, with humor, with leadership, exhibiting his commitment to being that happy warrior that we all know and love; that happy warrior that worked to advance every Member of the House's objectives more than his own, because that is how he is wired, Mr. Speaker. That is in his DNA in recruiting candidates—minorities, vets, women, making the Republican Party the party of the United States that reflects our entire society that believes in those fundamental tenets of America.

He nurtured that in each of those Members once they were in this House on their legislative priorities because he believes in his favorite book's mantra that we want to go from good to great, and he wanted every Member to go from good to great. KEVIN MCCARTHY delivered on that in his leadership responsibility in this House. He put the right people in the right seat every time.

As I conclude, Mr. Speaker, in this tribute to my dear friend from California, our Speaker Emeritus, I go back to Shakespeare, and like Mr. MCHENRY from North Carolina, it is not farewell; it is adieu.

Let me tell you something, Mr. MCCARTHY, as they said in Henry V, when you tackle the next agenda: "Once more unto the breach, dear friends," we are at your side. We are charging forward.

Mr. Speaker, may God bless him, God bless his family, and God bless this House.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Guam (Mr. MOYLAN).

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Speaker Emeritus MCCARTHY for his dedication and service in Congress and for leading the Republican Party courageously.

We saw this year how he prioritized doing the right thing and maintaining his integrity above all else, regardless of the consequences. His unwavering support for my district, the island of Guam, and his tireless efforts in fighting for the island's interests will never be forgotten.

His legacy will continue to inspire future leaders and his impact will be felt for years to come in my district and in the Halls of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, as Speaker MCCARTHY embarks on new endeavors, I know that he will be greatly missed. May God bless and guide him in all his future endeavors.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the Speaker Emeritus, for any remarks he may want to make.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the dean, Mr. CALVERT, and my colleagues from California for their kind words. I am so very proud and appreciative of my friends for coming.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the constituents for giving me this opportunity to serve them. To America, I loved every single day.

Less than 13,000 people have ever been given the privilege or the honor to serve in this body.

To those colleagues on the other side of the aisle, I thank them for the work they have done. We may disagree at times—I disagreed with the vote on this one, too, but one thing I think we must quite understand and the advice I can give is, do not be fearful if you believe your philosophy brings people more freedom. Do not be fearful that you could lose your job over it.

I knew the day we decided to make sure to choose to pay our troops, while war was breaking out, instead of shutting down, was the right decision. I also knew a few would make a motion because somehow they disagreed with that decision. Do it anyway. I would do it all again.

However, there is so much we were able to accomplish in a short amount of time. I watched a short clip the other day of a quote of mine: "I had the privilege of being leader for 5 years and I think about did I leave this place better than I received it?"

I remember sitting where Congressman CALVERT was and it was the state of the Union. The Democrats had won the majority. I was elected minority leader while another colleague from my State, NANCY PELOSI, was elected Speaker.

I watched the Democrats stand up and they were very diverse. They looked like America. I watched us stand up. We had lost the majority. I say we looked like one of the most restricted country clubs in America. I thought at that moment I could be the leader of a declining party, or I could focus on what I know brought me to this party: Conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that we are all equal.

I would take that message to places people didn't think they would vote for

a Republican. The California delegation at that time was pretty small, and, yes, it was competitive having the Speaker from California. She would put out that she was going to win a lot more seats in California. However, I am proud to say in those election cycles, we picked up five more seats in California. That is larger than our overall majority. We picked up five more in New York, Oregon, and Arizona. And in that same timeframe, the party I loved lost in the Senate, both cycles, lost the Presidency, but we won. What is the secret? It is the quality of the candidate.

I looked at YOUNG KIM, MICHELLE STEEL, JOHN DUARTE, and DAVID VALADAO. These are unbelievable seats that that idea wins in. I look at our party today and it doesn't look like it did 5 years ago. We were winning in places you haven't seen before. When I look to the future, I think it is much brighter. Why? Because the ideas are different.

When you look at the time I served as Speaker, we didn't ignore the border. We actually secured our border with the smallest majority here to govern. Even when we had a large one, we could not do it, and that came from the subcommittee of the Chairman TOM MCCLINTOCK. We brought people from all sides of the aisle together.

When I watch the gas prices just skyrocket under the Biden administration, we didn't sit back. We made it our number one priority and passed energy independence.

The public sits above, but for those 4 years, they didn't get to. We opened this place back up because it is the people's House. We created the select committee on China to make sure America can be competitive. We put our accountability on the weaponization so the American citizen would be protected.

We made the largest cut in American history, and this body voted for it, welfare reform to get people back to work, and the largest recessions in American history, where money was appropriated, not used. Only in Washington would you let it still be there.

As we watched crime rise across the country and D.C. want to go the same way, first time in 30 years, this body stood up; 170 on the other side of the aisle thought you should decriminalize carjacking, and others. The President threatened to veto it, but we did it anyway. We stopped him; and it became law.

We believe in building things in America, but we watched many times the laws we thought that were passed before to protect us only slowed us and weakened us. For the first time in 40 years, we reformed NEPA.

We did all this with a slim majority, but what I am most proud of is what the future holds. The legacy will be about the ones I see who serve here now, and I know the potential of what they will do. I know the potential of this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I am so thankful to be given the opportunity to serve. I will

be departing, but that doesn't mean I will stop serving. Those across this Nation should join together to become those citizen legislators. We cannot let this body fail to do the jobs that are the most basic that we should do every day. We should never allow this body to stop doing what is right.

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If you come across that question of whether you should do what is right out of fear of losing your job, do it anyway because it is the right thing to do, and this is what the Nation requires. I think putting people before politics is always the right answer.

I thank my friends for their kind words. I thank them for their friendship that will not end, and I thank this Nation for creating a body that is represented by the people. I think we should rise to the occasion one more time. Thank you.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, it has been my privilege to lead this Special Order for the last hour to say good-bye to our friend from the floor but not from our lives. He will be around.

Finally, I will requote our friend from Bakersfield, California, Merle Haggard, once again:

If we make it through December

Got plans to be in a warmer town come summertime

Maybe even California

If we make it through December, we'll be fine.

Merry Christmas, happy Hanukkah, and I yield back the balance of my time.

EXPRESSING MY GRATITUDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Still I rise, Mr. Speaker, always proud to have this pre-eminent privilege of standing here in the House of Representatives, honored to have the opportunity to serve the people of the Ninth Congressional District who elected me, but also the people of this country, this entire country, because when they elected me, they elected me to become a United States Representative. As such, when I vote, I am voting for them, but I am also voting for the country.

Today I rise to be grateful and to express my gratitude and my appreciation to the people of the Ninth Congressional District for allowing me this opportunity, this singular opportunity of serving in the Congress of the United States of America. I have been blessed.

I thank the people who happen to live in Brazoria County for allowing me to serve them. It has been an honor, and it continues to be my honor. I, in no way, am indicating that I am about to leave the Congress. I think that this is an opportunity to express my gratitude. I plan to be here next year and

until the people of the Ninth Congressional District decide otherwise.

I thank the people who live in Brazoria County. I thank the people who live in Fort Bend County—these counties adjoin each other—and Harris County.

I didn't get here because I was so smart. I am here because there were people who thought that I might make a difference in their lives, and I have tried my best to do so, so I thank them for affording me this opportunity.

I thank my staff. Members of Congress get things done only when they have a good staff. I have an excellent staff, and I thank them for what they do to make it possible for me to do things that I ordinarily would not be able to do.

I had a friend, Mickey Leland, who served in this Congress, and he reminded me on many occasions that a great person will always rise to the occasion, but the greater people make the occasion, so I thank these occasion makers, the people who make it possible for me to come here and stand and speak in the House of Representatives in this Capitol Building.

I thank my chief of staff here in Washington, D.C., who does an outstanding job. I won't go through his credentials in the entirety, but he is a lawyer, Scott Bell. I thank Scott for the fine job he has done to lead the D.C. team.

That team consists of Aaron, who is my legislative director; Raphael, who is a senior in the office; Jalaina, who is a legislative assistant in the office; Madison, who is my office administrator; and then there are other persons who are coming on board. I believe that Izzah will be on board with me. I have extended an offer to her. We will see if she accepts.

My D.C. team has done an outstanding job. I am very proud of the job that all of the members of this team have afforded the people of the Ninth Congressional District of Texas.

However, I do want to mention one standout, and that is Claudia. Claudia and I happened to bump into each other when she was working in another capacity here on the Hill. I take great pride in selecting people who don't apply for the job, people that I just happen to bump into along life's way. Such was the case with Claudia. I just bumped into her. We had some casual conversation, and something said to me, this is the person who can represent you when people first enter your office. I thank Claudia very much for the job that she does.

Jalaina and I met when I was at a speaking engagement. She didn't apply for the job. I spoke to her for some small length of time, found out that she was looking for a job on the Hill. She applied, and Jalaina now works in the office. I mentioned her earlier. She is a legislative assistant in the office.

I am proud of this D.C. team, but in Houston I have a team that has been with me for a very long time, and I am

proud of them, as well. I am proud of Rachael Rodriguez, who came to me from labor. She is a labor-oriented person, as am I. I am a dues-checkoff member of a local labor union, 1550 AFSCME. As such, I am proud to say that Rachael Rodriguez has done an outstanding job leading the Houston team. She is more than capable, competent, and qualified. She has a great personality. She is the kind of person who respects others with her smiles. Rachael Rodriguez.

Then, of course, there is Crystal Webster. Crystal is the deputy district director, and she does a little bit of everything. In that office we all take pride in getting the job done. Everybody will pitch in to do whatever has to be done. Crystal Webster has done an outstanding job. I am grateful that she has been with me for many years.

The persons that I have just spoken of, Crystal and Rachael, have both been with me for more than a decade.

Of course, I am honored to have in that office Clarence Holliday. We call him Doc. He has done outstanding work in the outreach area, also as a caseworker. He is just a fine man, former NAACP president out in Fort Bend County. He does outstanding work. I am proud to have him.

I am also proud to have Catherine. Catherine is polyglot. She speaks four different languages; quite well, I might add. She connects me to communities that but for her I wouldn't connect with. These people are making a difference in the lives of the people in the Ninth Congressional District.

I also am honored to have with me Sam, Sam Merchant. Sam Merchant is a person of Indian heritage; not Native American, Indian heritage. He has been with me for a number of years as an outreach person. I regret to say to you that Sam will be leaving the office. He has served us well. He is moving on to a sunset of retirement. I greatly appreciate the work that Sam has done for the people of the Ninth Congressional District.

Of course, we have Robertine, Robertine Jefferson. Her father was my pastor. He passed away some time ago. I never intended to hire Robertine. I just happened to be at an event and found out that she was interested in work, and she came on board with me. She helps us with our events. She is an event coordinator; par excellence, I might add. She does an outstanding job. I could not but for her do the many different things that we do in the district.

Of course, there is Teque'lia. Teque'lia is the coms director in the office. She came on board not so very long ago and has been very talented. She picks up on things very quickly, and she produces a great work product, so I am proud to claim Teque'lia as a member of the team in Houston, Texas.

There are other persons who are not on the team by virtue of working in the office. I want to make sure that I acknowledge them as well because they