

thank them for their dedication to our Nation.

From the Greatest Generation who served in World War II to the veterans who traversed the harsh jungles of Vietnam, to the young people who took up the banner and persisted in the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan and in Iraq, we owe our veterans an endless debt of gratitude.

It is our responsibility to provide for our servicemembers when they heed the call to serve, as well as to care for them when they return home.

Mr. Speaker, we must fulfill our promises to our veterans and deliver on the promises, the benefits that they have earned. We need to make sure that we end veterans' homelessness. Whether it be ensuring timely access to quality healthcare, enabling the pursuit of educational opportunities, or providing the tools to start their own business, let us reaffirm to our veterans that they will have the support and the services that they need following their service.

To all our veterans, thank you for your service. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

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RECOGNIZING WEST LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL FOR PATRIOTISM

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the patriotism of West Lutheran High School in Plymouth, Minnesota, and their annual Veterans Day celebration.

Every day, the students at West Lutheran recite the Pledge of Allegiance, even when they did not have enough flags for their classrooms. So the senior American Government class raised \$1,200 to purchase flags that will honor their alumni who have answered the call to serve in uniform.

The West Lutheran Veterans Day ceremony is now a central part of life in the Plymouth community, and every year they recognize contributions and sacrifices made by those in uniform. This year, veterans will be treated to breakfast, the music of the West Lutheran band, and remarks by Tom Warren, Sr., a veteran of the U.S. Army and Operation Desert Storm.

So, Mr. Speaker, I commend the West Lutheran community for keeping this tradition alive, and I also thank our veterans for the selfless acts of courage that keep our country safe.

THE STATE OF AMERICA'S VOTING INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, 17 years ago, the United States began a 2-

month-long crash course in voting machines and election infrastructure. The 2000 Presidential election opened our eyes to the fact that voting equipment in most places was out-of-date and unsafe.

We didn't learn the lessons of 2000, and in 2017, America's election infrastructure remains in a bad state. We must act immediately.

First, we need to help all local and State governments replace their outdated paperless machines with more secure systems.

Second, we need to require post-election audits of all paper records to make sure that the results tabulated by voting machines have not been hacked.

Third, we need to help election officials at the local level upgrade their database and election infrastructure to protect against all cyber attacks.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting all efforts to modernize and protect our voting infrastructure and legislation dealing with cyber attacks.

CELEBRATING MONTANA'S STATEHOOD

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

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a special place: Montana.

From our snowcapped mountains to our nearly endless prairies, Montana is an awe-inspiring place of tremendous beauty. We call it Big Sky Country, the Treasure State, the Last Best Place, and we call it home.

When Montana first became a territory in 1864, it was the Wild West. Prospectors, cattle ranchers, and settlers overcame scorching sun and blistering cold to establish our Nation's 41st State.

But there is something even more special than the beauty of an eastern Montana sunset or being knee-deep in a crystal-clear mountain stream. It is the people of Montana. Montanans are kind, warm, generous, and hard-working people.

On November 8, 1889, our special place became part of something even more special, the land of the free and the home of the brave. Today, Montanans celebrate the 128th anniversary of our statehood.

OUR MILITARY OPERATIONS IN NIGER

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to sound the alarm about our military operations in Niger.

On October 4, four U.S. Army Special Operations Forces were tragically killed on a mission in Niger. My deep-

est condolences to the families of these fallen heroes.

This is a mission, Mr. Speaker, which Congress still knows nothing about. And as recently as last week, Secretaries Tillerson and Mattis testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on this tragedy. But one question remains unanswered: Why were our servicemembers in Niger?

It is outrageous that Congress has been left in the dark about these operations. At a minimum, we should have some basic knowledge of the missions we are asking servicemembers to risk their lives for.

Myself and others sent a bipartisan letter to the administration demanding that President Trump seek authorization ahead of any future military operations in Niger.

It is not just Niger. Speaker RYAN needs to stop blocking a debate and vote on these ongoing wars. The people deserve answers.

What is the holdup, Mr. Speaker? What are you afraid of? Why don't you want the American people to know?

Congress, yes, is missing in action. We owe it to our servicemembers and our constituents to have a debate and a vote on these ongoing wars. Congress needs to do its job.

RECOGNIZING COLONEL BEN MARGOLIUS AND MR. AL EATON, FOUNDERS OF THE SOUTHERN TIER VETERANS SUPPORT GROUP

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

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Ben Margolius and Mr. Al Eaton, founders of the Southern Tier Veterans Support Group.

Ben is a veteran of the Army, serving as the chief of joint operations for the U.S. Transportation Command and holding leadership positions at USCENCOM, USEUCOM, and USTRANSCOM.

Al is a veteran of the Navy and, like my son, a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, having served as a naval flight officer on P-3 Orions, performing antisubmarine warfare and surface surveillance missions.

After their military service, Ben and Al saw a great need to provide help to veterans where other agencies could not. This started informally, with Ben and Al getting donations and support where they could, until the Southern Tier Veterans Support Group was formed officially in August of 2011.

Today, Ben and Al's work has brought over 70 community partners together to assist veterans and their families, with 425 veterans receiving \$65,000 in assistance since 2016.

Thank you, Ben and Al, for your service and for all that your organization has done to help our veterans.

Go Navy.