

plant a seed that bears fruit in future years. Melissa Fike has distinguished herself and made an impact that will be felt for years to come.

Madam Speaker, I want to commend Melissa Fike on her great work making a difference in the lives of so many young people and congratulate her on this prestigious award.

RECOGNIZING MORRIS BURGER, FORMER PRESIDENT AND CEO OF BURGERS' SMOKEHOUSE

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, it is with great joy that I share news of Morris Burger, former president and CEO of Burgers' Smokehouse of California, Missouri, being inducted into the Meat Industry Hall of Fame.

After serving his country in the Army, Morris returned home to run the family business with the goal of producing the finest cured ham in the country. The business was extremely successful and expanded numerous times over recent decades to the point that its business orders now exceed 500,000 hams and tens of thousands of pounds of bacon, sausage, and specialty meats each year.

Morris retired in the 1990s, and the business is now run by the third and fourth generations of Burger family members.

Morris Burger has left a legacy to be proud of as Burgers' Smokehouse continues to epitomize quality, taste, and innovation, while playing an active role in the community and remaining an influential leader in the industry.

Congratulations, Morris Burger, for being inducted into the Meat Industry Hall of Fame, a well-deserved honor.

STOP DRUG SMUGGLING BY FILLING THE TUNNELS ASAP

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, last week, our U.S. Customs and Border Patrol agents announced the discovery of a highly sophisticated, illegal, 4,309-foot cross-border tunnel from Mexico into California built by the drug cartels.

Unfortunately, while the tunnel was first found in August of 2019, it will still take several months to close the tunnel as the agency completes a mandatory environmental review and a lengthy contractor bidding process.

In October of 2018, I visited the southern border and heard directly from Customs and Border Patrol agents in Arizona, and I heard a similar story.

The process of closing drug tunnels is arduous and time-consuming. It often takes 3 to 4 months to abate this threat. That is unacceptable.

Last year, I introduced H.R. 3968, the Eradicate Crossing of Illegal Tunnels Act, to address these problems.

This bill expedites the approval process by removing the unnecessary red tape currently preventing our CBP agents from addressing this critical vulnerability. It allows the Secretary of Homeland Security to waive the environmental review and for indefinite contracts to be secured so drug tunnels can be filled in a timely manner.

We need to ensure our Border Patrol agents have the tools necessary to effi-

ciently and effectively remove illegal access into our country, hurting our community with illegal drugs. It is time to pass this crucial legislation, and I call on my colleagues to support my bill.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize February as Career and Technical Education Month. Each year, this month highlights the benefits of a skills-based education and the valuable contributions that CTE students make to the American workforce and the American economy.

More specifically, February 2 through February 8 is SkillsUSA Week. SkillsUSA is a leader in the CTE movement. This annual celebration represents nearly 370,000 SkillsUSA members across the country who are developing the personal, workplace, and technical skills necessary to earn and keep good-paying and rewarding jobs.

A one-size-fits-all approach to education is not an effective way to prepare students for the workforce. We are doing students a great disservice when we only promote what is considered a traditional college experience.

When we look at the potential of our Nation's learners and contrast that with the 7 million unfilled jobs nationwide, clearly, there is a disconnect. This is often referred to as the skills gap, and CTE can help us bridge this divide.

Now, I have the privilege of serving as the co-chair of the bipartisan House Career and Technical Education Caucus alongside my colleague and good friend, Congressman JIM LANGEVIN.

Over the years, we have met with many educators, counselors, administrators, and students to better understand the resources necessary to support learners of all ages.

I am proud of the legislation that we have put forward to ensure students have the tools they need to pursue a rewarding education, and, eventually, a rewarding career.

With this kind of support, we can help empower students and better prepare them for a 21st century workforce. Most recently, that includes H.R. 5092, the Counseling for Career Choice Act, a bill that would invest in career counseling for high school students as well as professional development opportunities for the counselors who support them.

Career and technical education is not a plan B. It is a valuable educational option that is empowering learners of all ages to take control of their personal and professional futures.

To me, the ideal educational system is one that allows students to get in with as few barriers to entry as pos-

sible, get the education that they need, and get out. By providing students with a clear picture of what the workforce entails—or, more specifically, by investing in career and technical education—we can help make that a reality.

Madam Speaker, I am asking my colleagues to join me in celebrating Career and Technical Education Month by supporting the Counseling for Career Choice Act and other common-sense, bipartisan bills that help provide quality CTE opportunities to our Nation's students.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. SÁNCHEZ) at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi Seth Frisch, New Shul of America, Rydal, Pennsylvania, offered the following prayer:

Almighty, I stand before You in prayer and in memory as I am reminded of Solomon, King of ancient Israel, who would preside over a most unusual judicial hearing, one in which two mothers would lay claim to the life of one child, a child they each would insist to be their own.

This parable allows us to see Solomon's wisdom as preserving the nation, as we are sadly reminded, so soon after his death, that the kingdom is split asunder.

I, too, am reminded of Abraham Lincoln, when he spoke with prophetic-like prescience: "A house divided cannot stand," which was soon to become a war of brother against brother. From this we would soon learn that our future lies not in enmity, but in unity.

For, Lord, the Book of Leviticus, from Your Torah, teaches us in words inscribed upon the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land, to all of the inhabitants thereof," thus uniting one of our Nation's ideals, "e pluribus unum," out of the many, one.

Lord God, the Founders of this Nation understood our strength to be in the celebration of our differences while assiduously working to put our divisions behind us.

And so it is, Dear God, that we pray You remain with us. Continue to guide all of us in realizing the dream of this great country, to be a Nation indivisible, a Nation seeking liberty, and above all, a Nation providing liberty and justice to all.