

that Congress itself has taken since the desegregation of the Armed Forces in 1948.

It seeks to foster opportunities for women and minorities.

We bring new visibility to congressional nominations to our service academies to train a more diverse next generation of leaders.

We create a special investigator to review and investigate racial disparities in the military justice system and personnel practices.

We create a special prosecutor for sexual assault committed at our military academies.

We foster and train a greater number of minorities within the special forces and aviation communities.

We tap into the talent at our historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions.

We hold the Secretary of Defense and service component leadership accountable for progress and give them the tools to make it happen.

This package updates workplace and climate surveys to include experiences with supremacist and extremist activity, anti-Semitism, and racism, allowing leadership to understand the full extent of these beliefs and better tailor responses and disciplinary action.

Finally, after decades of inaction, we reckon with one of the darkest periods of our history, the institution of slavery. This NDAA bans the display of the Confederate flag on Department of Defense property and directs the removal of the names from military installations of those men who betrayed their country—our country—and who fought a war to defend the institution of slavery.

The culture we create in our armed services matters. Diversity and inclusion in our armed services matters. It enhances unit cohesion and it improves military effectiveness. We have known this since 1950.

Our work is far from finished, but this year's NDAA represents an important step toward this pivotal moment.

HONORING MAJOR GENERAL BILL BLAND

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and honor the life of Major General Bill Bland of Georgia's First Congressional District, who passed away peacefully at his home surrounded by family at 84 years old.

General Bland is the former Adjutant General for the State of Georgia and a beloved husband, father, and a good friend.

He enlisted in the Georgia Air National Guard in 1958 and received his pilot's wings in 1962 at Moody Air Force Base.

General Bland served faithfully in a variety of assignments which took him

all over the world. He was a command pilot with more than 8,000 hours, flying in nine different types of aircraft. He also served in the position of Adjutant General until his retirement in 1999, after more than 40 years of service in the U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard.

I had the honor and privilege of attending church with General Bland and his lovely wife, Harriet, at Wesley Monumental United Methodist Church. It was evident Jesus Christ was the Lord and savior of Bill's life, and he used all the gifts God gave him to serve others and bring glory to God. He was an active and faithful member of the church, where he served on the board of trustees for 17 years.

General Bland will surely be missed by his friends, family, our church community, and all who knew and loved him. His legacy of selfless devotion to our country and those in need will remain for countless years to come.

CELEBRATING THE FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center's, or FLETC's, 50th anniversary.

Since the Consolidated Law Enforcement Training Center was created in 1970 before becoming the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, they have continued the mission of safeguarding our homeland and serving as America's enterprise resource for Federal law enforcement training.

In its first year, FLETC graduated 2,200 students. Last year, FLETC welcomed more than 67,000 students. They have grown to manage more than 850 training programs across the training sites, including one in Brunswick, Georgia.

For the past 50 years, FLETC has been a critical program to ensure our officers of tomorrow receive the proper training to protect the communities in which they serve.

FLETC has done a great job at adapting throughout their existence from hurricanes, government shutdowns, to a worldwide pandemic. Whatever they have faced, FLETC has done a remarkable job at getting invaluable Federal law enforcement personnel to the front lines.

Now, more than ever, is an important time to honor their five decades as the Nation's producer, resource, and steward of Federal law enforcement training.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all who work tirelessly at FLETC, especially those at Glynco in Georgia's First Congressional District.

REMEMBERING KYLE STEVEN HUGUNIN

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and honor the life of Mr. Kyle Steven Hugunin.

Friends, family, and members of Kyle's community recently recognized the 1-year anniversary of his passing at the youthful age of 30. He was from Savannah, in Georgia's First Congressional District, and was an out-

standing, kind, and loving individual, who was a friend to all.

Kyle was employed by Industrial Conveyor Belt Services for 10 years and worked hard in all he did.

While reminiscing on Kyle's abundance of joy that he brought to all family, friends, and others, they recalled that "he had one of the best smiles ever." He represented what it looks like to truly live life to the fullest and not take any day for granted.

Kyle was a 2007 graduate of Benedictine Military School and loved the outdoors, hunting, fishing, golf, and baseball.

My thoughts and prayers go out to all who knew and loved him during this difficult time.

CONGRATULATING BRUNSWICK-GOLDEN ISLES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce for the U.S. certification at the highest five-star level.

Accreditation with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the only program of its kind. It defines excellence in chamber planning and recognizes chambers for outstanding contributions toward positive change in their communities. There are currently only 204 chambers across the country that have earned the accreditation designation, and only 128 are five-star.

The Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce has been the voice of the business community and a leader among community programs.

I applaud all members of the chamber for their hard work throughout the years to excel above other chambers throughout the Nation and their efforts to lead by example.

In part due to the chamber's hard work and dedication, our community is an exceptional place to live, work, and visit. I look forward to seeing the positive future of the chamber and the communities they help serve and grow.

CRITICAL INITIATIVES INCLUDED IN FISCAL YEAR 2021 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House passed H.R. 6395, the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act.

The passage of this year's NDAA in the House was a bipartisan achievement done under extremely difficult circumstances, and I would like to congratulate Chairman ADAM SMITH, and particularly Ranking Member MAC THORNBERRY, as this will be his final NDAA before his retirement at the end of this year.

I wanted to take a few moments to highlight some of the provisions in this legislation which I am grateful were included.

These include provisions which will strengthen manufacturing in my home

State, protect the employment rights of our Nation's servicemembers, help to improve maternal and mental healthcare for servicemembers and their families, and strengthen ties with one of our Nation's oldest allies.

The Southern New England Regional Commission, H.R. 5124, which this bill included, establishes a regional commission that will facilitate the investment of Federal funds in southern New England, including my home State of Rhode Island, to build upon our regional strengths, such as defense manufacturing, shipbuilding, and renewable energy. This initiative will generate critical economic growth in the region to reduce poverty, unemployment, and out-migration in counties that were hit hardest by the Great Recession and now by COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge Congressmen JOE COURTNEY, JOE KENNEDY, STEPHEN LYNCH, JOHN LARSON, and BILL KEATING, who are cosponsors of this legislation, and I thank them for their support of this critical initiative which will benefit all of our districts.

This year's NDAA also includes the Justice for Servicemembers Act, H.R. 2750, which I authored, clarifying that the statutory rights of servicemembers and their families under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act cannot be waived through forced arbitration unless it is agreed to after a dispute arises.

American servicemembers, veterans, and their families have sacrificed much in service of our country. They have fought to protect the fundamental idea that we are a nation of laws and institutions that guarantee the rights and prosperity of every American.

Since the Second World War, Congress has created many laws, including the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, to provide essential protections and guarantee every veteran and Active-Duty servicemember, including the Reserves and National Guard, the right to be free from workplace discrimination on the basis of their military service and their right to their day in court to enforce these protections. But for too long, forced arbitration has eroded these fundamental protections by funneling servicemembers' claims into a private system set up by corporations without the same procedural safeguards of our justice system.

Buried deep within the fine print of everyday contracts, forced arbitration clauses block the brave men and women in uniform, as well as their family members, from having their day in court to hold corporations accountable for breaking the law. This bipartisan provision ends this shameful practice by clarifying that arbitration clauses are only enforceable if agreed to by servicemembers or their families after a dispute arises.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues, Congressman JARED GOLDEN, Congresswoman SUSAN DAVIS, and Congressman GUY RESCHENTHALER, for their strong bipartisan support for this provision to

protect our men and women in uniform.

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Also included in this year's NDAA is a provision which will require the Department of Defense to provide a report to Congress on the maternal healthcare, in particular mental healthcare, that is available to our Nation's servicemembers, as well as the spouses of servicemembers.

According to the CDC, 1 in 8 women nationwide experience symptoms of postpartum depression, and in some States that percentage can be high as 1 in 5.

Yet, according to the What to Expect Project, data related to instances of postpartum depression and other mental health conditions associated with pregnancy and childbirth is not widely available.

This report required by the amendment will require the Department of Defense to outline the care that is currently available for servicemembers and their spouses who may experience symptoms of postpartum depression.

Finally, this year's NDAA will include a provision which will encourage greater investment and trade between the United States and Portugal.

Last year, I introduced the Advancing Mutual Interests and Growing Our Success, or the AMIGOS Act, H.R. 565, which makes Portuguese nationals eligible for E-1 and E-2 nonimmigrant visas if the Government of Portugal provides similar nonimmigrant status for U.S. nationals, legislation which passed the House without opposition in December of last year.

Access to these investor visas will allow Portuguese investors to support projects in the U.S., benefiting our economy as well as that of Portugal.

As one of the first countries to recognize the United States after the Revolutionary War, Portugal is one of our closest economic partners and strongest allies.

Today, the United States maintains that longstanding relationship as the fifth largest export market for Portugal, and its largest trading partner outside the European Union.

The AMIGOS Act will strengthen this trade partnership and strengthen ties with our longtime NATO ally, Portugal.

I would like to acknowledge Congressman BILL KEATING and Congressman DEVIN NUNES for their support of this provision, and the instrumental role they played in securing its inclusion in this year's NDAA during the House Armed Services Committee markup.

I would, once again, like to thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member THORBERRY for supporting these provisions, and for their work on this year's National Defense Authorization.

THE CONVERSATION ON STATUE REMOVAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from

North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it is time, yet again, to correct the record.

For years, my colleagues across the aisle and the mainstream media have been spouting off unfounded claims that Republicans are complicit with the presence of statues in the Capitol that memorialize figures who had ties to the Confederacy.

Democrats seem to have forgotten that members of their own party on the State and Federal levels are the ones responsible for these statues in the first place.

Since 1870 statues have been present in the Capitol, and since then, Democrats retained a majority in the House 39 times. They had ample opportunities to remove controversial statues from the Capitol, yet, they did nothing. Why has it taken this long for them to even broach the issue?

We can all agree that racism, in any shape or form, must be denounced and rejected. But it is odd that my colleagues across the aisle want to skew the narrative, do everything they possibly can to rewrite history, and insert themselves into a conversation where they lean on conjecture more than they do on facts.

For years, I have advocated that both of North Carolina's statues of Charles Aycock and Zebulon Vance be removed based on their ties to the Confederacy.

I have suggested that two statues of people that all North Carolinians and Americans can be proud of be put in their place. I am proud that the first Republican majority in North Carolina's legislature in 140 years voted in 2015 to replace the Aycock statue with a statue of Reverend Billy Graham.

For years, the North Carolina Democrat Party has used former Governor Aycock's name, along with Governor Vance, for major fundraisers, and have held meetings in buildings named after him. Where was the initiative then?

North Carolina's former Democrat Governor, Bev Perdue, sidestepped questions about buildings named after former Governor Aycock in press conferences. Instead, she pivoted to his impact on public education in North Carolina. Again, I say, where was the initiative to remove the statues then?

Even in 2007, in a Democrat primary for Governor in North Carolina, it was said that addressing controversial statues was not the answer and that "the issue of equality is one that North Carolina must deal with on a more broader level."

If our colleagues across the aisle want to have a meaningful discussion on this issue with us, we welcome it.

The decision to replace these statues goes beyond bipartisan collaboration. It is about doing what is right, in an expeditious manner, as opposed to exploiting a situation to score cheap political points.

Mr. Speaker, describing the vote we will hold today as "political showmanship" would be an understatement.