

also about bringing those options to America's children in elementary and secondary schools.

One of the best examples of options is the expansion of school choice. In the expansion of school choice is the growth of charter schools. Over the last 12 years, public charter school enrollment has tripled, and America now has 3 million students attending these schools.

Along with the growing demand for charter schools, homeschooling and private school choice programs are increasing. There are 2.3 million students being homeschooled, and enrollment in private school choice programs has increased more than 100 percent.

Making school choice available to more families should be a priority for all of us. It is clear that parents are looking for options, and we want opportunity for them to be open to everyone.

#### HONORING CRYSTAL WINEBARGER

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to wish Crystal Winebarger of the Fifth District a very peaceful and happy retirement. For the last 16 years, Ms. Winebarger selflessly served as the Hunger and Health Coalition director of operations located in Watauga County, North Carolina. The Hunger and Health Coalition's mission is to lift up the community by providing resources such as food, medications, and heat in the winter to those in need.

Crystal worked with members in the faith community and local churches to ensure the well-being of many individuals and families. It is my belief that North Carolina will benefit from her tireless efforts for years to come.

A lasting legacy of service is something that is becoming all too rare in our neighborhoods today. I will remain forever grateful to Ms. Winebarger for her service to our community. I wish her a happy retirement.

#### RECENT RHETORIC

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

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, in bizarre Washington news of the last week, the raging controversy is whether the President of the United States referred to other countries and a continent as s---holes or s---houses. As if either word means a drop of difference, especially when you insult other nations in the world as our President did.

Equally worrisome is that the leadership of this branch of government, the U.S. House of Representatives, a coequal branch of government, has been complicit or silent about how to respond to the comments made by our President. In fact, Speaker PAUL RYAN took 19 hours and 53 minutes to respond.

And with all of that time, enough time to have driven from Washington, D.C., to Dallas, Texas, or to watch the movie "Jaws" nine times, what was his stinging and necessary rebuke after

that much time and thought? "Unfortunate." The Speaker said the President's comments were unfortunate and unhelpful.

Look, it is unfortunate when you walk outside and step in a puddle of water. This was more like walking into a global-sized pile of S.

We are not on the staff of the White House. We are a coequal branch of government, and it is about time we acted like it. Saying nothing, or basically nothing, is unacceptable. We need to put our country before our political party.

Calling other countries, and even a continent, names like s---holes or s---houses puts our servicemembers and our Americans overseas at greater risk. Weak words or silence makes Congress complicit with the President's racist rhetoric.

And, by the way, people outside the beltway just think Congress is full of S. Everyone else had the proper response to the President's comments, that they were pure BS.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

#### HONORING BOB DOLE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise because today former Senator Bob Dole will receive the Nation's highest civilian honor to recognize his decades of service as a soldier, a lawmaker, and a statesman. House and Senate leaders will present the 94-year-old former Senator with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Senator Dole represented Kansas for 35 years: first as a Representative of this House, and later lending his leadership to the U.S. Senate. In 1996, he was the GOP candidate for President.

President Ronald Reagan, in 1989, said that Senator Dole served America heroically and "has . . . been a friend to veterans, farmers, and Americans from every walk of life. Bob Dole has stood for integrity, straight talk, and achievement throughout his years of distinguished public service."

Senator Dole has served this country, this Nation, on the battlefield, enlisting with the U.S. Army during World War II. During a military offensive in Italy, he was seriously wounded while trying to save a fellow soldier. Despite his grave injuries, Dole recovered and was awarded two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star with an oak cluster for his service, among other medals.

I am proud that we will honor Senator Dole today for his life of service to the United States both in the military and here on Capitol Hill. It is sure to be a moving ceremony in honor of a real American hero.

#### HONORING ARMY SECRETARY MARK ESPER

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, service to one's country

is among the most notable and selfless acts throughout history. Our military men and women have shown uncompromising honor, dedication to duty, and genuine love of country.

This evening, Members of Congress will have an opportunity to meet the 23rd Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Mark T. Esper. Secretary Esper is a 1986 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He served on Active Duty for more than 10 years before transitioning into the Reserve, achieving the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Secretary Esper's service included deployment with the 101st Airborne Division during Operation Desert Storm. For his valor during that operation, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal.

Proudly, the Secretary is a Pennsylvania native. He graduated from Laurel Highlands High School in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, in 1982. Secretary Esper later earned a master's degree in public administration from Harvard and a doctorate from George Washington University.

I am looking forward to meeting the Secretary tonight thanks to the reception hosted by the House Army Caucus.

In addition to the Secretary, we will be joined by General Mark Milley, the 39th Chief of Staff of the Army. The Army senior leaders and members of the Army staff will also attend.

This reception provides an important opportunity for Members to meet directly with Secretary Esper and General Milley as well as the Army staff to gain their perspectives on the strategic environment facing the Army during the 115th Congress and discuss issues facing our Army, our soldiers, and their families.

Two outstanding events will take place today in the Capitol, and I look forward to both of these historic occasions.

#### CONGRATULATING THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE SHOWMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association on the occasion of their 50th anniversary. I look forward to joining them Friday evening at their annual Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association convention as they celebrate this monumental milestone.

The Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association has served to keep the outdoor amusement industry alive and strong through their combined efforts. The PSSA has grown because its members have learned to put their individual goals aside for the common goals of the industry. This unity really has given them the strength and foresight necessary to continue their work into the next century.

Their annual convention and trade show brings together board members, volunteers, and staff from most of the 109 Pennsylvania county and local fairs.

For 14 years, their supportive scholarships have generated more than \$200,000.

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Their investment in our Commonwealth's next generation of leadership is to be commended.

Thanks to all the members of the Pennsylvania State Showmen's Association for the work that they do, to the best of their human ability, to keep the outdoor amusement industry the best of America's family entertainment. Congratulations and happy 50th.

#### HONORING TOBY COSGROVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. FUDGE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Dr. Toby Cosgrove, an innovative leader and the recently retired president and CEO of the Cleveland Clinic Hospital System. I am fortunate to know Dr. Cosgrove personally, and I am privileged to call him a friend.

Some say a picture is worth 1,000 words. That was certainly true of Toby Cosgrove. Toby was an accomplished sailor as a young man. That was his path until he saw a photo of his neighbor in an operating room. That photo inspired Dr. Cosgrove to become a surgeon.

He graduated from Williams College in Massachusetts and earned his medical degree from the University of Virginia School of Medicine.

After medical school, Dr. Cosgrove served our Nation in Vietnam as a captain in the U.S. Air Force. He was awarded a Bronze Star and the Republic of Vietnam Commendation Medal for his service during the war.

Dr. Cosgrove joined the Cleveland Clinic staff in 1976. Dr. Cosgrove was a world-renowned heart surgeon for more than 30 years. He performed more than 22,000 operations and pioneered the first minimally invasive heart valve surgery. Throughout his remarkable career, he acquired 31 registered patents.

Dr. Cosgrove took the helm of the Cleveland Clinic in 2004 and made the health of the clinic employees a priority. Some of his wellness initiatives included implementing a smoking ban on all campuses, ensuring healthier food options in cafeterias, and opening weekly farmers' markets.

During his tenure, Dr. Cosgrove focused on enhancing patient outcomes and a better patient experience. Dr. Cosgrove is credited with instilling a vision and culture that has led to the Cleveland Clinic being described as "a role model of healthcare delivery."

He coined the phrase "Patients First" and made headlines by hiring America's first chief experience officer to ensure caregivers were meeting the medical, physical, and emotional needs of patients.

Dr. Cosgrove led the expansion of Cleveland Clinic's footprint to over 100 locations in northeast Ohio, including 10 regional hospitals and 21 family health centers.

Under his leadership, the Cleveland Clinic has become Ohio's largest employer. Total visits increased to 7.1 million and research funding grew to \$260 million.

The Cleveland Clinic health system includes facilities in Florida, Nevada, Canada, Abu Dhabi, and a new London facility scheduled to open in 2020.

Dr. Cosgrove stepped down at the end of 2017. In tribute, the Cleveland Clinic community came together to raise over \$50 million for the Cosgrove Transformation Campaign to honor his career and legacy.

The Cosgrove Transformation Campaign will ensure Cleveland Clinic remains a world leader in innovation, research, education, and improving the patient experience.

On behalf of the people of the 11th Congressional District of Ohio, I thank Dr. Cosgrove for his years of innovative leadership at Cleveland Clinic and his commitment to improving the health and wellness of those we serve.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that Dr. Cosgrove's impact will continue to be felt for decades to come.

#### HONORING THOMAS COWARD

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

Mr. YOHIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of one of Alachua County, Florida's, true trailblazers—Alachua County, Florida, is my home county in northeast central Florida—Mr. Thomas Coward, who passed away on December 23, 2017.

Mr. Coward was drafted into the Navy in 1942 and served during World War II. After his honorable discharge, he went on to pursue higher education, graduated with his bachelor of science in social studies from Lincoln University in Missouri, and followed it with a master of science from Tuskegee University in Alabama.

Upon completion of his master's, he returned to his alma mater, Lincoln High School in Gainesville, to teach civics and history. His interactive style of teaching that included mock government scenarios encouraged students to get involved in government affairs.

He later went on to serve as the dean of students for Lincoln High School, then transferred as the dean of students to the newly opened Buchholz High School in Gainesville, Florida, in 1971.

He ended his career in the school system in the county administrator's office, having served in the Alachua County school system for over 31 years.

While his students remember him for his dedication to shaping young minds, Mr. Coward is known in the community at large for being the first African American elected to serve on the Alachua County Commission in 1974. It is a seat he held for over 18 years. Incidentally, it was the first time since the Reconstruction Era that an African American had been elected to the Alachua County Commission.

During his tenure, he helped to establish the first Office of Equal Opportunity and focused on economic development through the community, in particular east Gainesville.

In fact, his document "Plan East Gainesville" is still frequently referred to as a planned vision for that community.

His time on the county commission inspired him to help found the National Forum for Black Public Administrators and the National Association of Black County Commissioners.

Additionally, he owned and operated Thomas Coward Realty for 25 years, he was the first African American to receive his brokerage license in Alachua County, and he was a member of the National Association of Realtors.

Throughout his life, he continued to lead and inspire his community through positions such as the president of the State Regional Planning Board and as a board member for the East Gainesville Task Force and the Chamber of Commerce.

Additionally, he was involved in organizations such as the Gainesville Cotton Club, the Elks, the Phi Beta Sigma fraternity, all of which focused on serving the community and, in the case of the Cotton Club, helping to preserve history while revitalizing the building to reopen as a museum and cultural center.

His leadership and dedication to our community led to the Alachua County Commission dedicating their Community Support Services Auditorium to him in 2016.

Once quoted as saying "My idea is if you are going to change things, then you have got to be involved," Mr. Coward embodied this idea and held the title of many firsts throughout his life. I have no doubt his legacy of leadership and service will go on to better our community through future generations.

Mr. Speaker, his legacy has and will inspire the future of our county, our State, and yes, our Nation. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. Coward for his service to all. He will be missed.

#### UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA 2018 NCAA FOOTBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Alabama Crimson Tide on their NCAA Football National Championship win against the University of Georgia Bulldogs.

In a historic comeback, the Crimson Tide overcame a 13-0 deficit to win the game in overtime and to return the title to Tuscaloosa. With this year's victory, the University of Alabama wins its 17th national title, by far the most of any school in the modern era of football.

This is head coach Nick Saban's fifth championship win in just nine seasons.