

TACKLE ISSUES AFFECTING
BLACK MEN AND BOYS

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, from their health outcomes to their unemployment income, from their education rate to their incarceration rate, Black men and boys are disproportionately impacted by government policies.

It is not that Black men and boys are falling behind. It is that they have never been ahead.

For centuries, government policies have redlined Black men and boys into a lower social status than their White counterparts. This is an institutional problem.

Yesterday, I joined with many of my colleagues at the House Triangle to stand in support of Congresswoman FREDERICA WILSON's bill to create the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys.

We were joined by young men who want nothing more than to live the American Dream free of discrimination. This country owes them that.

H.R. 1636 will bring together experts to tackle the wide range of issues that have kept Black men and boys behind for hundreds of years. It will mark the beginning of the end of racial disparities that have kept communities across the country down.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to support it.

IN RECOGNITION OF MAURICE A.
FERRE

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

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about the life of a hero of mine, Maurice A. Ferre. He is a Puerto Rican-born public servant who is a former six-term mayor of the city of Miami and the first Hispanic mayor of any major American city, serving from 1973 to 1985.

He has served as the chair of the Miami-Dade County Expressway Authority and served for 8 years on the Florida Transportation Commission.

As mayor, Ferre provided leadership and vision when Miami took its place as one of the world's most vibrant cities, eclectic and diverse and international in nature.

Throughout his years in office, he focused on economic development, job creation, and a visionary approach to improving south Florida's transportation and public infrastructure, as well as transforming the area into a center of inter-American trade, banking, and commerce.

He remains active in business, commentary on current events, teaching, and public service.

In 2006, he explored issues concerning Puerto Rico in a book on political sta-

tus, "Where is Puerto Rico Headed?"— "Hacia Donde Va Puerto Rico?"

His career has been marked by a style of public service that encourages people from widely different views and philosophies to work together in the name of common good and progress.

Ferre embarked on that journey early on as a Florida House member, then a commissioner, later the mayor of the city of Miami, and as vice chairman of the Dade County Board of Commissioners.

Ferre has served on numerous boards, as well as on President Ford's commission on immigration and President Carter's ambassadorial nominating commission.

Ferre credits his wife of 64 years, Mercedes Malaussena Ferre, as his north star, and his loving family, including 6 children and 13 grandchildren, as his anchor.

BREAK THE CORPORATE STRANGLEHOLD ON OUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, we must have a moral awakening, a spiritual revolution on how we treat a person's health in this country.

We must understand that every single human has a right to be healthy and comfortable, to live with dignity, and to receive the healthcare they need to flourish.

At present, this understanding is in conflict with a sinister, unjust force in our society: corporate greed.

Why are people forced to skip insulin injections so they can pay their rent?

Why are my residents charged \$70 for a PrEP, a pill that could dramatically reduce HIV transmission, when the same pill costs \$7 abroad?

Corporate greed has replaced the moral imperative that everyone live in health and dignity. There is more wealth in this country than any other in human history, and millions go without health insurance and prescription drugs, people condemned to live with pain and suffering because we have chosen corporate profits over our dignity as a nation.

We are watching a crisis unfold in real time. It is time we break the corporate stranglehold on our health and well-being, lost profits of the insanely wealthy be damned.

We have much more important things to protect. We have the soul of this country to rescue.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO
MEXICO-UNITED STATES INTER-
PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CRAIG). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276h and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, of the following

Members on the part of the House to the Mexico-United States Inter-parliamentary Group:

Mr. CORREA, California
Mr. GONZALEZ, Texas
Ms. JACKSON LEE, Texas
Ms. ESCOBAR, Texas
Ms. LOFGREN, California
Mr. CARBAJAL, California

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO
HOUSE DEMOCRACY PARTNERSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 104(a) of House Resolution 6, 116th Congress, and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, of the following Members to the House Democracy Partnership:

Ms. MOORE, Wisconsin
Ms. TITUS, Nebraska
Mr. CONNOLLY, Virginia
Mr. TED LIEU, California
Mrs. TORRES, California
Ms. KELLY, Illinois
Ms. SEWELL, Alabama
Ms. DEGETTE, Colorado
Ms. PLASKETT, Virgin Islands
Ms. LEE, California

□ 2000

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL
POLICE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD) is recognized for half the remaining time until 10 p.m. as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, this week, thousands of law enforcement officers, their families, and their supporters from around the country gathered in Washington, D.C., to commemorate National Police Week.

We are here tonight to thank those who put on the uniform every day to protect our communities and put their lives in the breach between the criminal element and the public they protect.

We are also here to recognize those who have completed their service and now enjoy a well-deserved thank-you for their selfless service to their communities.

But, most importantly, we are here to honor the fallen.

Last year, 158 police officers gave their last measure of devotion to their communities. Among these heroes, you will find every gender, every creed, every race, every religion. They hail from every corner of America.

One of those 158 officers was not only from my district, but served at the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office with me, where I spent a 41-year career.

Officer Lance Whitaker began his career with the Atlantic Beach Police Department and then served 17 dedicated years at Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. He was tragically killed while responding to a call in the early morning hours of May 15, 2018, almost 1 year ago today.

He left behind his son, Cade; his mother, Lannie; and his sister, Angela. He also left behind a memory and a legacy that will live on in the hearts and minds of those who knew him.

Many of us are here today to honor friends, family, and loved ones like Officer Whitaker, who gave his last full measure of devotion to a community he loved and a community that loved him back.

I now ask that we observe a moment of silence for Officer Whitaker and all of the 158 brave law enforcement officers who lost their lives protecting our community.

Tonight, Madam Speaker, in a very bipartisan fashion, we will hear from Members on both sides of the aisle and from all across the country as we join together to show our unity in supporting our police officers.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HILL), my friend who is from a law enforcement family and brings a strong pro-police voice to Congress.

Ms. HILL of California. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Florida for joining forces with me this evening to host this bipartisan Special Order hour in honor of National Police Week.

As you are about to see, supporting our law enforcement is an issue that unifies us across geography and political party, bringing together diverse perspectives and deep gratitude. I am so proud to rise in support of our law enforcement and the professional peace officers who work tirelessly every single day for the safety and security of our communities.

I represent California's 25th Congressional District, which is home to many of the police officers who serve all of Los Angeles County. My community is rooted in service. It is a value that I grew up with, and one of the reasons that I chose to serve my community by running for office.

My dad is an Air Force veteran and has spent three decades in law enforcement. In fact, he was here with us this week as part of a large group from our district who flew out for Police Week.

As a little girl, I remember what it was like to wonder if my dad would make it home at night. I remember being so scared for his life because he was on the front lines protecting mine and all of the other members of our community. I was proud of him then, and I am proud of him now.

But unlike then, I now have the opportunity to fight for him and the men

and women serving just like him. Protecting and supporting our law enforcement should not be partisan. The speakers joining us today demonstrate that we can have meaningful, legislative reform that works across the aisle.

I want to briefly touch on several pieces of legislation that I believe will protect and support our police officers, including H.R. 838, the Threat Assessment, Prevention, and Safety Act, or TAPS, which institutes a process that will identify, investigate, assess, and mitigate threats before they happen.

Fighting for law enforcement also means supporting legislation like H.R. 2070, the POWER Act, to develop new grants for chemical screening; H.R. 1236, the Extreme Risk Protection Order Act, to empower police to keep guns out of the wrong hands; and H.R. 2379, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership, to increase the number of lifesaving bulletproof vests accessible to our law enforcement. Through these bills and others in development, we can keep our communities and officers safe.

Most importantly, I am standing here today to honor the life of Officer Johnathan Tanner. He is a true public servant from the Antelope Valley in my district, who passed away, tragically, at the age of 28 years old after battling cancer. He will be remembered for his steadfast devotion to his community, his church, and his family.

Officer Tanner proudly served the California Highway Patrol with a dedication to the safety of the Antelope Valley. In just his first year out of training, he received the Mothers Against Drunk Driving Award for Excellence in removing impaired drivers from the road, and he was known for his efforts to build public trust in law enforcement.

Out of uniform, Officer Tanner served his community by volunteering his time at Lancaster Baptist Church, where he was a lifelong member. He taught youth ministry classes, coached sports teams, and led a bus route that gives children rides to church.

Officer Tanner leaves behind his wife, Jessie, their two young sons, and a baby girl who is expected to arrive later this month. He is also survived by his parents, two older brothers, and a younger sister.

I am proud to have represented Officer Tanner, and I know that his loved ones and the community will carry on the legacy of his light in the world.

Today, in honor of Police Week and in honor of all of the members of our law enforcement community, I am proud to stand in support of the men and women who put their lives on the line every single day like Officer Tanner and like my dad.

Thank you for all you do.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I thank Congresswoman HILL, and I look forward to working with her on some of the bills she just highlighted. I know that her law enforcement family is proud, so I thank her.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. STEIL), my

good friend, who is from Wisconsin's First District.

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, I appreciate Mr. RUTHERFORD putting together tonight's Special Order.

Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Racine County Sheriff Deputy Eric Schneider for his heroic actions on March 18.

While on duty, Deputy Schneider rushed to the scene of a house fire. He knocked on all of the doors and windows, yelling to see if anyone was inside.

A man came out of the house, but without regard for his own safety. Deputy Schneider entered the burning house to check if there were more people inside. Risking his life, he found a man who was unconscious. Deputy Schneider dragged him out of the house and saved his life.

Deputy Schneider is a hero. We are fortunate to have brave men and women like Deputy Schneider protecting us.

Madam Speaker, I thank Deputy Schneider. I commend him for his actions.

Madam Speaker, when law enforcement officers put on their uniforms and badges, they do not know if they will return home after their shift. Their job is dangerous. Too often, they sacrifice their lives to strangers.

Over the past year, Wisconsin has lost three police officers in the line of duty. Those heroes died while protecting us from harm.

We will never forget them. We will not forget their service. We will not forget their bravery.

We remember:

Officer Charles Irvine, end of watch, June 7, 2018;

Officer Michael Michalski, end of watch, July 25, 2018; and

Officer Matthew Rittner, end of watch, February 6, 2019.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman and the great State of Wisconsin for their support of law enforcement.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. TORRES SMALL), a colleague from New Mexico's Second District. She serves on the Armed Services Committee and the Homeland Security Committee, and, actually, after law school, worked for a U.S. district judge in New Mexico, so she has got that law enforcement background, also.

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle as Americans to address this issue and to recognize National Police Week, to support the brave men and women who protect and serve our communities every day, and to honor those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

The work you do is extraordinary, and it makes me proud to be the granddaughter of a former Las Cruces police sergeant, Angel Torres. He didn't talk much about his work on the beat, but

throughout my life, I have been stopped by people who have told me the difference he made in their life because he showed he cared by holding people accountable. He was the true embodiment of what it means to be a selfless public servant, just like so many in New Mexico and across the country.

It means something, something I will never fully understand, to know that every day you risk your life because of what you do.

It means something, something I will never understand, to know that every day and every time you enforce the law, you could lose your life because you signed up to serve.

As you risk your life to treat people with humanity, dignity, and respect, that is superhuman. That is why, during National Police Week and every day, we support our law enforcement officers and work to ensure they have the resources they need to protect and serve our communities.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for the kind words of support for our law enforcement community, and I thank her for her service earlier, as well.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON), my good friend from Nebraska's Second District. He serves on our Agriculture Committee and Armed Services Committee. He is a retired brigadier general and did his deployment in Iraq, and we thank him for that service.

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. RUTHERFORD, a great friend and colleague, for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize a bipartisan issue that threatens the safety of our law enforcement officers and our communities in which they serve, and we have a solution for it.

Enacted in 2004, the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act, known as LEOSA, established clear guidelines allowing experienced retired or off-duty officers who maintain proper training to obtain certification allowing him or her to carry concealed firearms. The desired purpose was to create a shared national policy between States allowing off-duty and retired officers to carry their firearms wherever they are, granted they are qualified and received appropriate credentials.

As many of my colleagues know, LEOSA has enjoyed a long history of support from both sides of the aisle. When it was first proposed by a Republican, LEOSA was cosponsored by more than half of the House.

Subsequent amendments signed into law in 2010 and 2013 under Democratic President Barack Obama expanded LEOSA's coverage to include law enforcement officers in most Federal agencies as well as military police. In both instances, reforms were sponsored by Democratic Senators.

□ 2015

LEOSA has always been a bipartisan priority because it is a law enforcement and public safety issue. It is not

a Second Amendment or gun rights issue. The same is true about improvements in H.R. 1156, the LEOSA Reform Act, which I am sponsoring.

The LEOSA Reform Act seeks to correct a number of unintended gaps and weaknesses in the original LEOSA bill. These gaps and weaknesses are not due to intentional restrictions in the original statute. Rather, they are areas in which the original statute is silent, resulting in conflicting interpretations and unintended restrictions which effectively limit the ability of off-duty and retired officers to carry their firearms, and we want them to do it in a manner that is safest for them and the public.

This lack of specific language defeats the original intent of the law, which is to allow off-duty and retired officers to carry their firearms wherever they go. Granted, they have to be qualified and have to have received appropriate credentials. That is a given.

It also created an inconsistent implementation across States, leaving many officers to either assume intended risk when carrying in accord with LEOSA or decide not to carry at all.

The LEOSA Reform Act adds specific language to address these unintended weaknesses, and in doing so will make existing law stronger and more workable for those who seek its benefit while maintaining the rigorous standards that currently apply.

The bill does not put more guns into our communities. Individuals affected by this legislation already have the authority to carry concealed weapons in most locations. Rather, H.R. 1156 will help ensure guns that are already in the hands of trained and certified law enforcement officers and retired officers can safely and legally be carried wherever they may be.

In fact, the LEOSA Reform Act will help ensure firearms do not end up in the hands of criminals by allowing law enforcement officers and retired officers to keep their firearms safely on their person, rather than being forced to leave them unattended in vehicles in parking lots of locations that are currently restricted from carrying.

The public's need for rapid intervention by off-duty and retired officers is made clear by the recent incident in California, where the heroic actions of an off-duty Federal officer who ran and shot at the synagogue gunman saved countless lives. It is an example that we see repeatedly. With the rise of tragic shootings in our Nation, empowering trained professionals to carry will allow them to respond more quickly to emergencies and provide years of expertise to these situations.

I have heard from law enforcement officials throughout Nebraska's Second District and the Nation on the importance these changes will have on the lives of our community's heroes and their ability to protect themselves and others. In fact, the LEOSA Reform Act has been endorsed by 20 professional law enforcement organizations whose

membership, when combined, is representative of well over half of all law enforcement in our country.

On National Police Week, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in providing greater public safety for law enforcement and our communities at home by cosponsoring the LEOSA Reform Act. Officer safety and public safety is a bipartisan issue, and together we must and can do better.

Madam Speaker, I will close with this: If I am in a situation where I am being victimized, who do I want near me?

I would love to have a retired or off-duty policeman who is armed, and this bill makes that more likely.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I am a proud cosponsor of the gentleman's LEOSA bill, and having been a law enforcement officer, I understand exactly what the gentleman is trying to accomplish. I support him 110 percent in that effort, and I appreciate the words.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER), who serves on the Foreign Affairs and Agriculture Committees. She is also—I think we can say this—a former CIA case officer.

Is it safe to say that now?

Ms. SPANBERGER. Madam Speaker, I got my deployment declassified. It is.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, the gentlewoman's father was a career law enforcement officer also.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman so much for the opportunity to stand here in solidarity with our colleagues across the aisle in honor of Police Week and in honor of our police officers and peace officers across this country.

I rise today to remember the remarkable lives of two Virginia State police officers, one from our district in Midlothian and one from nearby New Kent County. They were both killed in the line of duty.

On August 12, 2017, Lieutenant H. Jay Cullen and Trooper-Pilot Berke M.M. Bates were not responding to an ordinary call. Instead, they were flying via helicopter to an event that became infamous as one of the darkest days in modern Virginia history.

Cullen and Bates were en route to Charlottesville to monitor the events transpiring around the Unite the Right white nationalist rally. Forces of hate had gathered, and law enforcement was called in to help end the chaos.

After police had canceled the event as an unlawful assembly, Cullen and Bates were instructed to assist their fellow officers. They were to circle over Charlottesville, and their mission was to provide surveillance of the violence, restore order, and help the community end the nightmare that had transpired. However, mid-flight, their helicopter crashed on the outskirts of Charlottesville, and both Cullen and Bates were killed in action.

In the wake of the tragedy and the stress of the Charlottesville protests,

Executive Director Wayne Huggins of the Virginia State Police Association said: “I don’t know if State police, in its 85 years, has had a more excruciating time.”

The pain of the families of Lieutenant Cullen and Trooper-Pilot Bates is unimaginable, and the loss experienced by the Virginia State Police and their fellow brothers and sisters in the law enforcement community is still felt to this day.

This is National Police Week. We remember the brave and dedicated service of Lieutenant Cullen and Trooper-Pilot Bates. They died in an effort to protect their fellow Virginians, and their sacrifice will always be remembered.

As a former Federal agent, the daughter of a career law enforcement officer, and, most respectfully, as a grateful American and Virginian, I thank the law enforcement officers and peace officers who dedicate their lives to keeping us safe. This week and every week we stand with our law enforcement officers, and we will never forget those who laid down their lives for their neighbors.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Virginia and just know that our condolences go to those two officers’ families, those heroes that you lost this last year. God bless.

Madam Speaker, I would like to introduce the Member from the great State of Minnesota’s Eighth District, PETE STAUBER. He serves on the Transportation and Infrastructure and Small Business Committees and was a police officer in Duluth, Minnesota, for 23 years. I thank the gentleman for his service.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman RUTHERFORD for yielding to me to speak today.

This week is Police Week, a time to honor our brothers and sisters in the blue and brown. Every day law enforcement officers—local, county, State, and Federal—walk out of their homes leaving their loved ones behind and put their own lives on the line for the safety and security of others. They are our last line of defense, the protectors of our communities, and I am so honored to have served alongside some of these brave men and women.

As a local law enforcement officer with the Duluth, Minnesota, Police Department for 22 years, I have seen and experienced firsthand the violence committed against law enforcement officers, those who are only there to uphold the law and improve the safety of our communities. That is why I have cosponsored legislation like the Thin Blue Line Act and the Protect and Serve Act, which hold the perpetrators of these heinous crimes accountable.

So, now, more than ever, we must show our support for our law enforcement officers. We must make a commitment to them as they have com-

mitted to our friends, our families, and our communities. I am happy to stand here today with so many of my colleagues to show our support for the men and women in the blue and brown. I look forward to working with them in the 116th Congress to advance legislation that will support them, both when they are in and out of uniform.

The men and women in law enforcement deserve our respect, our admiration, and our prayers and love every single day, 365 days a year, 24 hours every day.

I stand before you, Madam Speaker, having done a total of 23 years in law enforcement. I can tell you that the men and women whom I served alongside with, I would go into any dangerous situation with them. We love our law enforcement officers, and we love their families.

This Congress stands ready to defend them and their needs, their requests, and any help they need from this Congress.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I am grateful for the gentleman’s 23 years of service. I know what commitment that is, and God bless him for that.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GOTTHEIMER), who is my good friend.

JOSH GOTTHEIMER is from New Jersey’s Fifth District who serves on the Financial Services Committee and worked in both the public sector as a White House speechwriter and in the private industry for Ford and Microsoft. I thank the gentleman for being here this evening.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Congressman RUTHERFORD, my good friend, and Congresswoman HILL of California for co-hosting this bipartisan Special Order hour in honor of our law enforcement officers. I am proud to serve with you both as a member of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus, co-chaired by our friend, Congressman BILL PASCRELL.

Madam Speaker, we are here today to commemorate Police Week and to honor all the brave law enforcement officers in New Jersey and across the country who put their lives on the line every day to protect our communities. They get our backs, and we should always get theirs. There is nothing partisan about that.

In 1962 President John F. Kennedy declared May 15 to be Police Officers Memorial Day and this week to be Police Week. Established by a joint resolution of Congress in 1962, National Police Week pays special recognition to those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others. Already this year, 43 police officers have died in the line of duty across the United States. We will never forget their bravery, service, and sacrifice. May God bless them and their families.

Madam Speaker, police officers are America’s heroes, and I am so deeply

grateful to all law enforcement officers, Federal, State, and local, for what they do day in and day out, especially those in New Jersey’s Fifth District, my district, and across our State.

That is why, in Congress, I am committed to fighting for all our sworn officers and first responders by making sure that our municipalities and police departments have the resources, equipment, and training they need to do their jobs safely and effectively. That includes critical programs like the COPS and JAG grants, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program, and the Law Enforcement Support Office excess equipment program.

We should also support the Thin Blue Line Act, which was referenced, because our officers rely on us to get their backs and to make sure we give them the resources they need to protect our families from violent crimes, drug trafficking, domestic violence, homegrown terrorism, and countless other threats.

I especially want to recognize all the men and women who took part in the annual Police Unity Tour, riding some 300 miles to Washington in honor of our fallen officers, and all of New Jersey’s finest who are here in Washington this week, including friends from the New Jersey PBA, the New Jersey State Troopers, the Port Authority PBA, and many, many others.

Just yesterday I was glad to spend some time with my friends, the Port Authority Police and members of the Fair Lawn Police Department Honor Guard who came to remember those whose names are forever inscribed at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial here on the Mall. Others from the State PBA and PBA police officers were here this week as well. Together we are all fighting to fully fund and reauthorize the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund in memory of the 37 Port Authority police officers and countless others whom we lost that day and for all the injured and ill 9/11 responders and survivors whom we must do right by today.

Madam Speaker, I thank, again, my colleagues across the aisle who have the backs of our first responders. But most of all, I am grateful for every law enforcement officer for their solemn commitment to protect and serve. We live in the greatest country in the world. With our brave law enforcement protecting our communities, we are ensuring always that our best days are ahead of us.

God bless our law enforcement officers and first responders, and may God bless the United States of America.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey for having the backs of police officers who have our back, and I thank the gentleman very much for being here tonight to show that support for law enforcement that is so important across the country.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CLINE). Representative BEN CLINE serves on the

House Judiciary and Education and Labor Committees. He is a lawyer and serves as an Assistant Commonwealth Attorney and was also chief of staff and—I didn't know this—chief of staff for my good friend, Bob Goodlatte, who is one of my heroes from Congress.

Mr. CLINE. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman RUTHERFORD for yielding and putting together this event this evening.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the men and women in law enforcement who serve our communities, States, and Nation with honor and bravery. These are our friends and neighbors who willingly face danger in order to protect their fellow man and make our cities better places in which to live.

Just this week in Lynchburg, Virginia, I joined several hundred with the police chief, mayor, and members of law enforcement from around the region to honor the lives of two law enforcement officers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the last year.

□ 2030

Virginia State Trooper Lucas Dowell, who was shot while serving a search warrant, was only 28.

Winchester Police Department Officer Hunter Edwards, who died in a vehicle collision while responding to a fight in Winchester, was only 30.

As this week draws to a close, I ask that all Americans remember the more than 150 officers this year who died in the line of duty and consider the danger that all officers face each day in order to keep Americans safe.

Your lives are a shining example of what is right in our world. By getting up each day and donning a uniform and badge, you are making a difference in our communities across this great Nation. Every single day, you have our gratitude.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia.

In particular, I want to offer, again, our condolences to those officers, those heroes from Virginia, who gave their lives in service.

Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize Representative CLAY HIGGINS from the great State of Louisiana, their Third District. He was a National Guard military police officer for many years, a SWAT operator. I am sure he will have some great words for us.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. HIGGINS).

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize American men and women who put on a badge every day, men and women of every color and creed, ethnicity, heritage, and background, of varied ideology and political affiliation. They are American patriots, one and all.

As a police officer, our job begins with an oath. That oath is not to a chief or a sheriff or a marshal. It is to the constitutional principles that represent the badges that we wear, badges like this.

In this body, we stand within the people's House. We serve within the parameters of our ability. We wear a small pin upon our lapel to designate our status as Congressmen and Congresswomen.

In humble service and an honor, yes, it is. But forget not, America, the men and women in your community, unseen, unheard, far too frequently unappreciated and unrecognized, who patrol your streets, your neighborhoods, your counties, your States, and the parishes in my State of Louisiana.

For they serve unknowing if they shall return home. They do so willingly. They place great faith in their Lord. The Word tells us that the Lord is my strength and my shield.

In many ways, we should recall that this small shield that we wear begins with faith, that this Chamber began with faith, and that the shield that officers wear from sea to shining sea maintains itself by faith.

This week, we honor the Thin Blue Line. You are known. You are loved. You are recognized. We honor you.

Madam Speaker, I thank the sheriff for allowing me to speak.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend from Louisiana for all his service those many years.

I would like to recognize, again, my cohost for tonight, Representative KATIE HILL. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HILL).

Ms. HILL of California. Madam Speaker, I wanted to finish out by thanking the 2,200 Capitol Police officers here who protect us and the 3 to 5 million people who visit the U.S. Capitol every single year.

They do the job that often goes unnoticed, but we are ensured our safety and protection, and that of every single person who comes to visit us, because of their hard work and service.

To every single law enforcement professional who dedicates their life every single day, we are eternally grateful. I am so proud to be working with my colleagues to continue to fight for recognizing our officers and to take this forward for many years to come.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, it has been an honor to be here with the gentlewoman tonight to recognize our law enforcement community.

Madam Speaker, I will close with this. It is from Ralph Waldo Emerson. He said:

The purpose in life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.

Madam Speaker, the 158 lives that we honor tonight, all the thousands of law enforcement officers serving this moment, they live well. For that, we are grateful.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ENSURE FULL PROTECTION FOR LGBTQ COMMUNITY THROUGH THE EQUALITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to uplift my LGBTQ neighbors at home in the 13th Congressional District. I want them to know that I uplift them today, and always, as their unwavering advocate in the United States Congress.

There are ideals and values we all should attempt to live up to in this country. I know many of us ran to be in this Chamber to ensure that our laws match those values and ideals as well.

When I think of these issues we confront as people and as a representative body, I always feel that we must use an approach that is rooted in values that uplift our whole communities. The values of equality, justice, and acceptance come to mind when I think of the need to pass the Equality Act.

Far too long, our LGBTQ neighbors have been forced to live a life of fear, a life in hiding, a life of oppression, and a life of instability.

We have come a long way in the LGBTQ rights community, but we have a long way to go. The Equality Act is a step in the right direction on this important path toward justice.

I think of the right side of history, when the right to marriage was afforded to same-sex couples, the moment when our LGBTQ neighbors in Michigan were able to create that special bond with their loved ones.

But I am also reminded of the stark reality that they faced being in States where they could still be fired from their jobs the day after their wedding for being gay.

I think of the trans community across the country that still faces discrimination and violence, especially trans women of color who are disproportionately targeted and killed. Our laws still do not protect them.

LGBTQ Americans remain vulnerable to discrimination on a daily basis and, too often, have little recourse. Fifty percent of the national LGBTQ community live in States where, though they have the right to marry, they still have no explicit nondiscrimination practices in other areas of their daily life.

One's identity could still mean deep harm and even death for some communities in this country, and we must change this.

I think of our LGBTQ neighbors who are denied public accommodation just because of who they are and whom they love. I think about how we are failing them by not living out our values rooted in justice.

This week, we have a chance to begin to change with the Equality Act. We now have a pro-equality majority,