

life of Brycen Gray, a talented and bright young man who was sadly taken away from us this past April.

A native of Strongsville, in my district, Brycen was a student-athlete at St. Edward High School. Dubbed a comedian by his friends and family, he had the power to bring a smile and joy to everyone he encountered.

Unfortunately, we lost Brycen in April. Following a battle with COVID-19, Brycen began to exhibit symptoms associated with COVID psychosis. Though he fought to the bitter end, he tragically passed after taking his own life.

Mr. Speaker, when I hear these stories and when I talk to the family, it is impossible not to get emotional. We lost a gifted, talented young man. And the hurt and pain that is inflicted upon those left behind is something no one should ever have to endure.

This is a moment where we should turn grief into action and actively find solutions. To start, we should work with the scientific community to gain a better understanding of the mental health implications of COVID-19 on Americans and other root causes of suicide, in particular amongst young Americans. This will help us look for further warning signs and make sure that young Americans get the help that they need.

We must not let Brycen's memory be forgotten. I pray for his parents, Shawn and Tara, and his two brothers, Ricky and Patrick, and the rest of the Gray family that has had to battle this horrible loss.

INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

(Mr. CARTWRIGHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I couldn't be prouder of this House for passing the American Rescue Plan, an aggressive response to the pandemic, to pull us out of the doldrums in this country.

As a result, millions and millions of Americans are back in jobs; millions and millions of American kids are back in schools; and so many people are vaccinated. We are back on the road to recovery.

But we can't stop there. We have infrastructure to address. I have been waiting for close to 10 years for us to pass an aggressive infrastructure program. We have 7,500 miles of substandard roads in Pennsylvania alone to fix.

China is investing in itself: its roads, its bridges, its rail systems, its transit systems. What would make us think we don't have to compete with China? What would make us think that our companies don't need every advantage to compete on the world stage?

Let's get infrastructure done, and let's do it boldly and aggressively to build up and invest in our own country.

TAKE ACTION ON SOUTHERN BORDER CRISIS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, America's southern border is in crisis, and this issue has been solely facilitated by the destructive policies of President Joe Biden.

Illegal aliens attack the border, while dangerous drug cartels take advantage of weak policies, putting children at risk. This is truly a disaster, and it is time that the border czar, Vice President KAMALA HARRIS, take action to protect American families.

The numbers speak for themselves. Encounters at the border reached a 21-year high in May of 180,034 persons. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency seized 934 pounds of fentanyl at the border in May, which is a 300 percent increase in a year capable of killing every American citizen. Criminal crossings have almost tripled since the previous fiscal year to 6,918 convicted criminals. Drug trafficking and human smuggling have also increased, putting children's lives in danger.

Biden named the Vice President with overseeing the crisis. It has been 84 days, and she still has not visited to see the children at risk.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we should never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Congratulations to Julianne and Hunter Wilson on the upcoming December blessed event.

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EL PASO IS A 2021 ALL-AMERICA CITY

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

Ms. ESCOBAR. Mr. Speaker, for the fourth time since 2010, the city of El Paso is honored to be named an All-America City for our resiliency, response to tragedy, and vaccination efforts against COVID-19 this year.

The National Civic League awards the All-America City award to communities where residents, organizations, and government work together to address challenges and improve quality of life. When President Biden announced his goal to vaccinate 70 percent of our Nation, El Paso not only met the goal a month early, but we have surpassed it and currently lead the country by 10 percent.

The All-America City award reaffirms our resiliency and outstanding civic accomplishments in the face of the tragic August 3 domestic terror attack and the devastating COVID-19 pandemic as well as our continued goodwill toward migrants seeking refuge at our Nation's front door.

El Pasoans are no strangers to challenges, and our strength is tested over

and over. Each time we grow stronger because we are and always will be El Paso Strong.

It is an honor to represent this extraordinary community here today, and I congratulate the city of El Paso.

INVESTIGATING COVID'S ORIGINS

(Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an incredibly important national security issue.

We all know that Wuhan, China, where the COVID-19 virus originated, is the home to the Wuhan Institute of Virology. The WIV is China's only cellular level 4 biosafety super laboratory that researches human infectious diseases. This lab is in very close proximity to the wet market that is reputed to be the origin of COVID-19.

Last year, Senator TOM COTTON was thoroughly dismissed for questioning the true origins of this virus, citing the Chinese Communist Party's duplicity and dishonesty from the very beginning.

We all know that the Chinese Communist Party lied to the world about the severity of COVID-19, how it is transmitted, and the dangers associated. There needs to be a thorough and serious investigation into the origins of COVID-19, what the Chinese Communist Party knew, and when, and what the World Health Organization knew and when.

Uncovering the true origins of COVID-19 will be incredibly helpful in helping us prepare for the next pandemic, which I think is something we can all agree on.

OPEN THE UNITED STATES-CANADA BORDER

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, it was recently announced that the European Union is lifting travel restrictions to allow Americans to visit once again.

Over a year under the crush of a devastating global pandemic, highly effective vaccines have made this game-changing moment possible.

Still, our border between the United States and Canada remains closed, leaving people unable to access their property and keeping loved ones separated for over 15 heartbreaking months.

This move by the EU would allow my Buffalo neighbors to take a 9-hour flight to Paris, France, but they can't take a 90-minute drive to Paris, Ontario.

The administration has set a goal of returning to a pre-pandemic sense of normalcy by July 4. For many living along the northern border, normalcy includes the ability to cross to check

on their property and to see their family again.

It is time to open the U.S.-Canadian border.

CRISIS AT THE BORDER MUST BE ADDRESSED

(Mr. GUEST asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year I had the opportunity to join with my other Republican colleagues to visit the southwest border. This was not a gesture, as the Vice President has referred to these visits. It was, instead, a learning opportunity.

The conditions we saw and the stories we heard conveyed a situation far worse than we had previously imagined. We learned that border encounters are at a 20-year high. We spoke directly to Border Patrol and law enforcement officers who told us that they are so overwhelmed with the care of migrants that they are unable to execute essential core roles of their job. We learned how drug cartels are taking advantage of the overwhelmed system and saw the routes they use to smuggle drugs and people across the border.

What we witnessed could only be defined as a crisis. This is why I encourage all of my colleagues and the Vice President to set aside political gamesmanship, visit the border, and see the crisis firsthand.

PROJECT ENLIGHTENMENT

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

Ms. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a pioneering institution in the field of early childhood education located in my district, Project Enlightenment.

Project Enlightenment provides extraordinary services to families and children, and I was privileged to visit with them last week.

In the late 1960s, insightful staff from the Raleigh city schools, Wake County Mental Health and Dorothea Dix Child Psychiatry recognized that strengthening a child's social and emotional development in the early years would have long-term benefits. They were right, and the American Families Plan recognizes this fact.

Project Enlightenment has offered prevention and early intervention services to young children by providing services to the primary caregivers in their lives. Over the years, they have helped people all over the State of North Carolina and all over the country.

I am grateful for the attentive staff that includes a variety of professionals. Because of their commitment to our children, they truly make our county and State a better place.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINGATE UNIVERSITY BULLDOGS

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

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I chose this photo—I could have picked a formal team photo—because I thought this captured the joy of the moment I am bringing to the Nation's attention.

Today, I rise to honor the Wingate University Bulldogs and Coach Jeff Gregory for a spectacular victory in the Division II College World Series. When Bulldogs fans filled the bleachers at the USA Baseball National Training Complex in Cary last Saturday, they witnessed history. Playing in their first ever College World Series final, the Wingate Bulldogs defeated Central Missouri, the number two ranked team in the Nation, 5-3.

In reaching the championship, Wingate joined the ranks of only two other North Carolina Division II schools, and despite losing their opening game, the Bulldogs won four straight to become the first team in 16 years to overcome an opening round loss to win it all.

Bulldogs, through your tenacity and persistence, you have won an incredible victory. I am proud today and always to represent Wingate University.

Congratulations, Bulldogs.

REMEMBERING JERROD WITHROW

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

Mr. LAMB. Mr. Speaker, on June 11, 2021, western Pennsylvania lost Officer Jerrod Withrow of the Mount Lebanon police, who passed away after a heroic battle with cancer.

Officer Withrow had a long and distinguished career in law enforcement, but one moment stood out. In October 2018, he responded to the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh where a mass murderer attacked a peaceful religious gathering with an assault rifle and killed 11 members of our community.

It is hard for most of us to understand the bravery and the raw physical courage that it takes to run toward gunfire rather than away from it, but that was the kind of person that Officer Withrow was. It was who he trained himself to be, and we thank him and honor him for his courage.

On behalf of the people of western Pennsylvania and on behalf of our national government, I wish to extend our condolences to Officer Withrow's wife, Lisa; his sons: James, Brayden, and Ben; and all of his family.

I am proud to remember Jerrod Withrow today in our Nation's Capitol and hopeful that our service here will be worthy of all those Americans like him who every day put their community and their country first.

MICHIGAN SHERIFF OF THE YEAR KIM COLE

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

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend, Sheriff Kim Cole of Mason County in Michigan. He was named Michigan Sheriffs' Association Sheriff of the Year this past week.

This award recognizes the sheriff who has made outstanding contributions to law enforcement and the criminal justice profession, demonstrates exceptional service to their community, and has contributed to the betterment of the Michigan Sheriffs' Association.

Kim Cole was first elected sheriff in 2012 and is currently serving in his third term. He started at the Mason County Sheriff's Office as a reserve deputy, and then was hired by the Mason County Sheriff's Office as a full-time deputy in 1985. He was then promoted to sergeant in 1993.

What is interesting, Mr. Speaker, is that Cole's great-great grandfather, Henry Cole, served as one of Mason County's first sheriffs.

Now, Kim will be the first one to tell you that you are only as good as the people you surround yourself with, and he is extremely proud of all of those who he serves with.

Kim leads with integrity, courage, fortitude, and compassion, and has a passion to serve his community.

Kim Cole, I want to say thank you. Mason County is a better place to work, live, and raise a family because of you.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN HELPS FAMILIES

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

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the significant struggles facing working families across America, struggles that have been exposed and exacerbated by the COVID pandemic.

That is why, through the American Rescue Plan, we took action to expand the child tax credit, helping to uplift families and reduce poverty. In my community, more than 40,000 households will receive an average benefit of nearly \$3,000 that will begin being disbursed in just a few short weeks. This is projected to lift 8,200 children out of poverty in my district alone.

When we talk about transformative investment to support working families, this is exactly what we mean, and it is why we need to make the expanded child tax credit permanent, to put kids and parents on the path to success, because when we ease the financial burden on families, they have the security and flexibility to contribute to the workforce, strengthen our economy, and set our children up for a stable and successful future.