

longtime, conventional treatment, where doctors would just be prescribing a medication. The value of thinking outside the box has just saved so many lives. To be able to bring this program to Georgia, to Florida, to California, all across our entire Nation, would be enormous.

I want to thank all my colleagues who joined me here today in sharing stories of veterans they represent or served with during their time in the military, and some of their own experiences. I look forward to continuing to work with each of them to expand and improve access to lifesaving mental health resources for our veterans suffering from PTSD and TBI.

We are less than 2 months removed from the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks and less than 3 months since the withdrawal of Afghanistan. The tragic events that unfolded in Afghanistan were hard for Americans to watch, including many Afghanistan vets who are speaking out.

What was interesting to note, and not surprising for many, as we are having our individual conversations, especially with the Afghan vets, the calls rose to the Veterans Crisis Line, online chats with the crisis line staff were up almost 40 percent, and texts to the crisis line rose by 98 percent.

For me, my life could be separated into two parts. I am 41 years old. Half of my life was before September 11, 2001; half of my life was after September 11, 2001. But what is so amazing about those who are currently serving, so many of them, and those who are contacting our offices looking for congressional nominations to go to a service academy, all they know is life post-September 11, 2001. They either weren't born yet or they are just too young to remember.

Everyone who is here in this Chamber now, every one of us probably vividly remembers exactly where we were on September 11, 2001. For these people who are signing up right now, to think that their whole life is everything we have seen post-9/11 and they still raise their hand and answer the call. We have a duty to look out for them, in some way to try to give back, because they are willing to give it all up in defense of us.

I want to thank all 14 of the veteran service organizations who have stepped up, the national commanders who come here to the Halls of Congress to talk about the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer program.

If you go back and look at the American Legion National Commander's testimony earlier this year in front of the House and Senate VA committees, he was advocating for the Dwyer program to be expanded nationally.

It is our duty to give back, to look out for our vets and our veteran families. PFC Joseph P. Dwyer left behind a young widow, a 2-year-old daughter, a proud family, and forever they should know that this country will never forget Joseph Dwyer's service and sac-

rific. We are trying to turn it into as much of a positive as possible.

For anyone who is out there, any veteran in need, there is the Veterans Crisis Line to call and there are online chats. There are ways to reach out in your local community and nationally. Please reach out to your local Department of VA, at the very least, if you don't know of any other opportunities or resources available in your community.

There are people who live around the block from you who will drop everything in the middle of the night to help you, as I mentioned earlier. Don't give up. We have your back. We are so grateful for your service to our country. This is a great world, a great country that is worth fighting to protect and defend, and a life worth living.

Madam Speaker, I thank all of the cosponsors, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the need to improve access to critical mental health resources for veterans battling with Post-Traumatic Stress and TBI, and to pledge my continued support on these vital issues facing our countless brave and heroic men and women who have dedicated their lives to serving our nation. It is imperative that we as a country and the United States Congress continue to work with our partners in government, industry, academia, and with private citizens to provide the best possible tools needed for their mental health and well-being.

TBI is a serious and complex injury that happens on and off the battlefield. In fact, most TBIs occur during training. While many injuries appear to be psychological, many of them are physical and are caused by actual damage to the brain because of blast exposure, heavy weaponry, or just doing the day-to-day job of a service member.

I stand firmly behind my colleague, Representative LEE ZELDIN, as a partner in his efforts and a cosponsor of H.R. 1476, the PFC Joseph Dwyer Peer Support Program Act—a wonderful tool for our military that provides grants for peer-to-peer mental health support authorized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. I will continue to support efforts like this and other measures to improve the safety, research, and well-being of those who volunteer to keep our nation safe.

The timing of this cannot be more critical. We know that following the debacle in Afghanistan, we have seen a significant increase of veterans calling the suicide hotlines and, very unfortunately, we've seen an increase in suicides. Many veterans are questioning the value of their service in Afghanistan, and hurting knowing that friends and colleagues died for what General Millie has called a strategic failure. I share in that pain frankly. I encourage anyone struggling with this to reach out and get help. You are not alone. But also know, that your service was worth it. We stopped terrorism for 20 years coming out of Afghanistan and protected the homeland. We killed or captured the terrorists that masterminded 9/11. I think the decisions by President Biden were wrong in the failed withdrawal from Afghanistan, but our country will learn from its mistakes and we will rebound. We always do because we are a free country. I encourage my fellow veterans to keep the faith . . . in our God and country.

I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to work together and ensure we do all we can to serve and support our men and women in uniform by keeping their physical brain health and mental health a priority.

HONORING RICHARD TRUMKA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I come before you with many wonderful colleagues to honor the life and legacy of Richard L. Trumka. Rich was a passionate and steadfast leader who committed himself to bettering the lives of working men and women in every nook and cranny of this country.

Like many made-in-America stories, Richard Trumka's had humble beginnings. He grew up in southwest Pennsylvania's coal country, the son and grandson of coal miners. He worked the mines himself, and he was able to go to college and then to law school. His talent and his charisma were hard to miss, which I guess helps explain how he came to lead one of our great and historic unions, the United Mine Workers of America, at a very young age.

As President of the United Mine Workers, Rich led the iconic Pittston Coal strike, a difficult but ultimately successful effort to fight off cuts to healthcare benefits of workers and their families. As a young activist, this labor struggle made a huge impression on me.

I knew Rich Trumka for over a quarter of a century, and I enjoyed working with him in numerous capacities. In 1995, I had the honor of running the field operation of his historic campaign to become secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, along with president John Sweeney and executive vice president Linda Chavez-Thompson. Their victory was historic because it represented the only insurgent takeover of the AFL-CIO leadership since the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations joined to create the AFL-CIO in 1955. That remains true to this day, 66 years later. Rich brought earthiness and oratory to the ticket, complementing the widely loved but more taciturn president John Sweeney from SEIU.

A mine worker from western Pennsylvania, a service worker from New York City, and a public sector champion in Linda Chavez-Thompson from Texas, they made a perfect combination and they brought big change to the labor movement in many ways.

For the next 11 years, I served as assistant director of organizing at the AFL-CIO, working closely with Rich and seeing his drive through innumerable organizing legislative and political campaigns throughout the Nation.

The picture next to me represents one such effort and one such opportunity for me to help Rich and the other officers carry out their missions.

□ 1700

In their campaign to take over the AFL-CIO, they said that they were going to get young people involved in the labor movement in unprecedented ways. And so we created something called Union Summer, and they told me without a whole lot of notice that I had to put it together and lead it.

In fact, we recruited young people from across the Nation, had over 3,500 applicants, and put 1,000 young people, which was the commitment they made—and they fulfilled it—1,000 young people on union organizing and bargaining campaigns throughout this Nation, and they were incredibly diverse. Something like two-thirds were women, and over half were people of color.

This picture comes from the launch of the Union Summer campaign, and after Union Summer was over, the officers gave me a little framed copy of this picture, and Rich Trumka's comments were classic Trumka. He said, "Levin, you did a good—no, an outstanding job on this effort. But thank God those kids of yours look like Mary." That was Rich Trumka. I still remember it.

It is no secret that Rich was elected to be president of the AFL-CIO in 2009 at a difficult moment for the labor movement. Due to a confluence of many different factors, working men and women faced a string of complex challenges. Becoming the head of the AFL-CIO was no easy task, but Rich was not one to pass up critical fights.

Instead, he was able to rely on his character and conviction and his relationships to forge a path of consensus and solidarity among the 57 unions representing 12.5 million members of the AFL-CIO.

Regardless of whether he was talking with workers on a factory floor or to the President of the United States in rooms of the White House few people ever see, even on TV, Rich was grounded in his pursuit to improve the material life of all working people and their families. The AFL-CIO was truly made better through his many contributions and his strong leadership.

Coming to Congress and working with Mr. Trumka as president of the AFL-CIO was a real highlight for me. I, and all who knew him, will miss him dearly.

I am grateful to my colleagues for being with me here tonight to pay tribute to Rich and to his remarkable life.

At this time, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), the chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his hard work on the Education and Labor Committee and for his strong support for working men and women in Michigan and across the country.

I rise today in honor of Richard Trumka, the late AFL-CIO president and one of the Nation's fiercest and

most effective champions for workers and their families.

As a former coal miner and leader of the storied United Mine Workers of America, Richard Trumka deeply understood the power of the labor movement and the importance of defending workers' rights to organize. His commitment to improving the lives of workers and their families never waned and has inspired countless people from all walks of life.

To honor Mr. Trumka's legacy, I remain committed to championing legislation that supports hardworking Americans and strengthening their rights in the workplace. To that end, the House has twice passed the Protecting the Right to Organize Act.

Our Nation's labor unions are critical to rebuilding the middle class in America, but decades of antiunion attacks have eroded workers' basic rights to organize and negotiate for better wages, benefits, and working conditions.

Among other things, this legislation would ensure effective sanctions for those who violate the law by retaliating against those who exercise their legal rights; and require workers whose rights have been violated to be temporarily reinstated while their cases are pending. The bill would lift restrictions on workers' First Amendment rights to engage in boycotts and strikes; and ensure workers can win a first contract, if they vote to support a union.

It is a fitting tribute that the PRO Act will be named after him. The next most important step to honor his legacy is for the Senate to pass this historic legislation. I look forward to the day when the Richard L. Trumka Protecting the Right to Organize Act is signed into law.

But we also have an opportunity to strengthen and protect our workforce through the Build Back Better plan. Notably, the Committee on Education and Labor's section of the plan will increase enforcement of labor law and civil rights violations and set meaningful civil monetary penalties for violations of wage and hour, worker safety, and labor laws.

The plan also includes a major investment in proven workforce development programs to ensure that Americans can access the training they need to find a rewarding career and earn fair wages.

These historic provisions advance Mr. Trumka's vision: to ensure that all workers have a good job and the power to determine their wages and working conditions.

Even up to his final days, Mr. Trumka was fulfilling that mission, rallying workers across the country and demonstrating the spirit and solidarity that defined his tenure as president of the AFL-CIO.

I hope my colleagues in the House and the Senate will join me in honoring Mr. Trumka's legacy by passing both the Richard L. Trumka PRO Act and the Build Back Better Act. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his hard work and dedication.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. SCOTT. That is really amazing, the idea that the PRO Act would be named for Rich Trumka. It is so fitting. It is really moving to me, as somebody who worked for him for so long.

I now yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives.

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, Congressman LEVIN, for yielding and for organizing this tribute this evening. I also thank Congressman BOBBY SCOTT for the honor that we are looking to bestow on Rich Trumka.

Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to honor Rich Trumka. Throughout his life, he never backed down from fighting for workers. As the leader of the 12.5-million-member American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, he championed workers every day.

He followed in his father's footsteps. He worked in the coal mines of Pennsylvania, as his father and his grandfather before him had. He rose to become president of the United Mine Workers and later president of the AFL-CIO with one singular focus, protecting and fighting for the right to organize and to collectively bargain.

Earlier in my congressional career, in 1996, during one of his many visits to my district—and I can remember it poignantly because he sat in my kitchen along with John Wilhelm, head of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers—we were on our way to the people's graduation on the New Haven Green because we were fighting, and he was there to help fight for better contracts for the workers at Yale University.

We were told that we wouldn't have very many people that day on the Green, and I will just tell you that they were 10,000 strong, led by Rich Trumka, John Wilhelm, and other labor leaders in this country. They gathered to advocate for new contracts, and he joined that chorus to support their efforts.

Together, I had the opportunity to work with him hand in hand to defeat the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement, because it would outsource jobs overseas; it would hurt American workers here. We worked in solidarity to renegotiate the new NAFTA agreement in 2019. I was proud to be at the center of these fights with Rich and so many more. He once said to me, as we talked about working together on this, he said, "My dear, we are like two coats of paint. We are together." I will never forget that conversation.

While I always valued his counsel, it was his friendship that I came to value most. Our shared Italian-American heritage, our commitment to fighting for better working conditions were rooted from the lessons that we learned at our kitchen tables. My mother was a garment worker in the sweatshops of the city of New Haven. He was a mine worker's son and understood how difficult that life was and what it meant

for struggling families and why the unions were the way out and the way for them to get what they earned and what they deserved.

Rich Trumka's legacy stretches far and wide. I do not know where we would be without him. Rich's relentless efforts to end unfair trade practices and restore U.S. manufacturing strength made him a tireless advocate for the labor movement in the United States and around the globe, and I was honored to call him a colleague and a dear friend.

To his family, I say that my thoughts and prayers are with you. To his brothers and sisters of the AFL-CIO, I say, solidarity. And I thank Rich, my dear friend. I thank him for his endless pursuit on behalf of those struggling for justice. I thank him for his counsel and thank him for his friendship.

Now it is our turn to carry on his legacy, a legacy of championing the dignity of all workers. He has shown us the way, and his fight continues in all of us. Solidarity now and solidarity forever.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I thank Rosa. That was really moving. I remember that 1996 day on the New Haven Green.

I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER), a great ally of the working people of this country.

Mr. KILMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Richard Trumka, a relentless champion for working people.

When I heard from labor leaders across the State of Washington following his passing, without exception they spoke about what a substantial loss his passing was.

But in the brief time that I have here to reflect on his life, I want to talk about what a gain it was to have him as a leader in our Nation: A gain for folks who, because of his work, can retire with dignity, a gain for workers who, because of his leadership, are safer and better compensated, a gain for every worker who can collectively bargain.

In fact, when I spoke to him last, we talked about how important it was to support our Federal workers throughout the region I am proud to represent, the brave public servants that protect our sailors through their work at the shipyard, that prepare our timber sales in the Federal forests, that welcome visitors to our national parks, that care for our veterans, that ensure citizens get the services that they need, and that keep us safe. We agreed that we need to do everything we can to have their backs, and throughout his life, he did.

I also admire that not only did Mr. Trumka advocate for our workplaces to work better for the American people, but he also wanted our country and our democracy to work better for working people. Advocating to protect access to the ballot box and to get big money out of politics.

As president of the AFL-CIO, he proudly represented millions of work-

ers throughout our country and hundreds of thousands of workers in Washington State: Shipbuilders and electrical workers, ironworkers, letter carriers, machinists and pipefitters, and paper workers and teachers and healthcare workers. I could go on and on and on. These workers are the heartbeat of our Nation.

In honor of his life, we should commit to continuing his legacy to ensure workers have dignity, to ensure workers have the right to organize, so that they can seek fair pay and better benefits and safer working conditions and to make our democracy work better for all Americans.

Madam Speaker, my sincere condolences to his family, to his friends, and to every worker and American who was touched by his life.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which 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 Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. NEWMAN).

Ms. NEWMAN. Madam Speaker, it is good to see everyone here tonight. This is a very special evening, although I wish it wasn't happening. I wish we weren't saying good-bye to Rich Trumka.

I remember the first time I saw him speak. I thought about, wow, there is a lot of intensity there, a lot of intention, and, yeah, he scared me a little bit.

I was very inspired to join a picket line that day. I had been on many picket lines before that, but he delivered his comments and what he intended to do for labor in such a way that made me feel like things were actually possible, that it was possible to make change at an employer, it was possible to make change at a plant.

And so specifically I joined a plant and their picket line. I didn't know anybody. I just showed up because I thought, wow, this guy is someone that I will follow, I will follow into fire. And I did, at least long distance for a long time.

□ 1715

And I have to tell you one other thing about Rich. One of the things that is immediately obvious—and I frequently see this in friends of mine that are in the military—he is a servant leader true and true and through and through. And I think that is the best kind of leader to be.

So I learned a lot from him and all of his work, but mostly I believe he inspired the movement to be stronger and more vibrant in the last decade.

So we say good-bye to Rich with heavy hearts but thank him for his

amazing work and his ability to inspire.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SUOZZI), one of the co-chairs of the Labor Caucus in the House of Representatives.

Mr. SUOZZI. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman LEVIN for yielding and for organizing this special order. We are so grateful to you for making sure we take this time to stop and honor the great legacy of Rich Trumka.

I first came to Congress in 2017, and one of the first things I did was request a meeting with Rich Trumka, and he took me to breakfast. I have always been a pro-labor person through my time as mayor and county executive of Nassau County. And I talked to him, and he made it very clear that what he was looking for and what the labor movement is looking for are champions that will be with you no matter what; not with you on some issues and not on other issues, but with you 100 percent.

Everything he said to me that morning really resonated with me. And I decided from that moment on that I would make it clear that I would be a true friend of labor because of the instruction of Rich Trumka.

The country has changed so much from the time from when he served as president of the United Mine Workers Union in the 1980s. And since the 1980s, we have seen tremendous growth in wealth in America. We have seen the Dow Jones go up 1,900 percent. We have seen the GDP go up 900 percent. But workers' wages during that same period of time have gone up less than 20 percent. So we have created enormous wealth in our country, but we are not sharing it with the men and women who go to work every day.

Rich Trumka has reminded us how important it is that for this great system of capitalism to survive in our country, the best system that has ever been in human history, which has created more wealth, more innovation, has lifted more people out of poverty, for it to survive for the long-term future, we have to learn how capitalism and our economic system can share the great production of wealth with the people who go to work every day.

Because the American Dream is based upon a very simple concept: if I go to work, I will make enough money. And with that money I can buy a home; I can educate my children; I can have health insurance; and I can retire one day in security without being scared.

Rich Trumka reminded us of that every day of his life, that we need to recreate the American Dream for people in this country; that hard work will be rewarded with sufficient wealth so that you can live the American Dream.

So my condolences to the Trumka family. Thank you to my colleague for setting this up. And thank you to Rich Trumka, a good and faithful servant, who has made our country a better place. And let's honor him by making

sure we do everything we can to support the labor movement in this country.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), a true champion of workers in this country for decades in this House, the longest serving woman in the history of the House of Representatives, and my good friend.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman LEVIN so very much, my Great Lakes buddy, for sponsoring this very deserved tribute this evening to Richard Trumka.

It truly is an honor to be here today in fellowship with my colleagues and those who are unyielding in their commitment to creating a better world for the hardworking men and women who build our Nation and world forward.

No one embodied that devotion more deeply than the man whose life we celebrate here today: Richard Trumka.

For nearly 50 years, President Trumka was steadfast in his dedication to advancing the dignity and worth of American and guest workers who clock into work every day to earn a living to provide for themselves and their families and do the work before them.

Each bring about their own version of the American Dream.

I knew Rich from his earliest days leading the United Mine Workers of America from 1983 to 1995 as its president, and I was blessed to call him a friend.

I well recall when the mine workers conducted a national strike against Peabody Coal in 1993 to achieve better wages and working conditions in this dangerous industry.

I always respected Rich as an ally in the battles against job-outsourcing trade agreements like NAFTA, which opened up the chutes for corporations to ship jobs overseas, unleashing a devastation of America's middle class and industrial America, the likes of which we had never seen before.

Having stood alongside him for many of these fights over the years, I witnessed firsthand how global his reach truly was.

I recall one convening in particular that he organized with workers from across the world.

There I saw how acutely he understood the need for working people to band together across national boundaries in common cause to better working conditions for all. He saw the future.

From the coal mines to Congress, workers had no fiercer advocate than when they were attacked by special interests or antiworker lawmakers.

We shall all miss him and his passion immensely.

I take heart in the knowledge that he left behind a coalition that is well prepared to take on the challenges that lie ahead.

America's unions are strong as the cause they pursue is just.

And in his memory, let us push forward on the path to building back better for the American people.

The working men and women of labor are poised and will distinguish themselves in retooling our Nation for the century ahead. And there will be many pylons that will be installed that will be done in the memory of Richard Trumka.

May God carry him high and give him deserved rest.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), Rich Trumka's great partner in the House of Representatives.

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman LEVIN for organizing this Special Order for a very special person. It is my honor to participate. I know you were a great friend and ally of President Trumka, and he would be so proud that you are leading the way for us this evening.

Richard Trumka. That name is synonymous with workers' rights. Richard Trumka, fairness for everyone. Richard Trumka, middle class with a union label on it. Richard Trumka, fighter for the people.

As we are engaged in our negotiations now, I think of Richard every day because he always said, when you get down to the end of the negotiation, that is when you have to be the strongest. Never tire. Never tire. Always save energy for that final negotiation. Because sometimes people relax and say, well, let's just get it over with, but Richard Trumka would never adopt that attitude when he was there working for the workers.

Richard Trumka was an unsurpassed titan of the labor movement. A third-generation coal miner, Richard dedicated his life for the right to organize from his work at the United Mine Workers of America to his decades-long leadership of the AFL-CIO.

In everything he did, Richard Trumka was always thinking about the workers. What can we do to give them more certainty in their lives in terms of good pay, jobs, benefits, and working conditions?

Richard Trumka was a great patriot, and he fought always to strengthen the middle class, as I said, and lift up those who aspire to it, understanding that the middle class—again, which is the backbone of our democracy—has a union label on it.

Richard carried his values into other realms of public policy, as he recognized and respected the dignity of all people, whether speaking out against Apartheid in South Africa or fighting bigotry and racism at home. His leadership transcended any single movement.

Richard's courage in speaking truth to power made a difference for millions. And it made Richard a respected ally in Congress' mission to advance the health, financial security, and well-being of working families.

After his passing, many members immediately called for the PRO Act—the cornerstone of Democrats' proworker agenda—to be renamed in his Honor.

Doing so would be a fitting way to pay tribute to this great hero for workers. We did pass the pension bill in the rescue package and now the PRO Act.

While we remain heartbroken over Richard's passing, we take comfort in knowing that Richard's leadership gives a legacy that will inspire countless people for years and generations to come.

I know I share the same impression when we heard that he died. It was like, it can't be. He is a giant. He is so strong. It can't be, but it was.

Again, the legacy that he left is something we will always build on in his memory. May it be a comfort to his wife, Barbara, their loved ones, and the 11 million men and women of the AFL-CIO that so many mourn their loss. We are praying for them at this sad time.

Richard Trumka, we love you. We miss you. May you rest in peace.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO), another person like MARCY KAPTUR and me who represents a district full of gritty, working-class factories and neighborhoods that Rich championed so fiercely.

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank Congressman LEVIN for arranging this evening's special order.

Today we honor the remarkable life of Richard Trumka, a person who poured his entire heart and voice and passion into what is right for workers and what is right for union workers. Rich emboldened that mission and fought with great fierceness in order to achieve. Rich taught us that anything worth fighting for deserves our efforts beyond belief, and he poured himself passionately into his mission.

A fierce champion of the labor movement and fearless proponent of the rights of working people, Rich revolutionized collective bargaining and civil disobedience as a mechanism for meaningful change in our modern era.

I was deeply saddened and stunned to learn of Rich's sudden passing back in August.

A great friend to so many of us, myself included and my district, we worked together to build strong enforceable labor standards into the heart of the new NAFTA agreement, which gives American workers a fair shot and level playing field on the global stage.

That kind of fight was at the heart of Richard's lifelong work, using unionism as a tool to build a fairer economy, a more just economy, a more robust and competitive economy for our society.

We must honor his indelible legacy and deliver the kind of generational change for which he fought day in and day out by creating good-paying union jobs and tackling the climate crisis, racial injustice, and economic injustice that disproportionately hurts working people.

My sincerest condolences go out to the entire Trumka family and all of his loved ones.

May Richard rest in peace.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the majority leader of the House of Representatives.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, who has been a dear friend of mine as his father was for a very long period of time. And we share in common a lot of things, but one of those things that we share in common is a great respect for Richard Trumka, a great appreciation for the leadership that Richard Trumka showed, not only in the labor movement but in our country as a citizen representing our best values.

And we share respect for the labor movement.

Richard Trumka, Madam Speaker, walked with the weight of America's workers on his shoulders, but he wore that weight lightly in one sense and with a great sense of responsibility in another sense.

□ 1730

He carried them with him always in his mind and in his soul. His life was devoted to the labor movement and to each and every worker who was part of the labor movement.

His loss, in my view, is a grievous one for our country, and he leaves behind a legacy for which we can all be grateful: the men and women in labor who have a better wage, a better place to work, and greater security because of Richard Trumka.

Thanks to Mr. Trumka, workers across the United States today have stronger representation and safer working conditions.

Madam Speaker, 12.5 million union members and countless others have looked up to him for decades as a force for our positive change, an unrivaled leader in the labor movement.

Few people epitomized the ideas of the workers' rights movement, which are also core values of the Democratic Party, in the way Mr. Trumka did. He was a fighter, but he was also a great tactician and strategist. Those, of course, are the determination and attributes that everyone who works hard ought to be able to get ahead and that working families ought to be able to access opportunities and economic security.

From the beginning of his career, first as a coal miner and then as president of the United Mine Workers of America, he was committed to forging closer ties between workers and their union representatives. He ultimately became president of the AFL-CIO because not only was he committed to do that, he did it. He accomplished it.

He made a difference for workers, for their families, and for America. He knew that union action was the greatest tool available to achieve labor reforms and to make economic security more attainable for workers and their families.

As American workers continue to face new challenges as a result of the

pandemic, it is essential that policy-makers continue to work closely with organized labor and leaders like Richard Trumka.

Madam Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic has placed so many of our workers and their families in situations dangerous to their health and also to their economic well-being. More than ever, workers need champions for their rights, their fair wages, and their fair benefits, and they are missing that champion they called President Richard Trumka.

We need to ensure that workers continue to have a strong voice in Congress, and we need to do everything we can to keep them and their families safe and able to access opportunities.

Madam Speaker, in his last major speech, Mr. Trumka told Texas AFL-CIO members that inequality is the greatest threat to democracy. He said this: "Without the right to vote and without the right to organize, there is no democracy."

I share that view with Richard Trumka. Our Democratic House majority will not waver in our work to secure both the right to organize and the right to vote. They are really two of the same principle.

We look forward to working just as closely with Liz Shuler—I might say a historic figure in her own right, like our Speaker, who spoke a little while ago—the first woman to lead the AFL-CIO. She has worked alongside Richard Trumka for years, helping him realize his goals for the organization in its fight for workers' rights in this country. Richard Trumka's vision for the future was one of dignity and justice for all working Americans.

Madam Speaker, we remain committed to that vision and will continue to honor his memory by fighting to realize his dream for all working Americans.

God bless Richard Trumka, and may God keep his family in the hollow of his hand.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Madam Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 23 minutes remaining.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LEVIN), the better half of the Levin caucus, my brother.

Mr. LEVIN of California. Madam Speaker, I thank my dear friend from Michigan and the other half of the unofficial Levin caucus.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the late Richard Trumka, a fierce fighter for the hardworking men and women of America's labor movement.

Rich Trumka dedicated his life to protecting the safety of workers, ensuring the right to organize, and upholding the principle that each and every person is to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace.

For many years, Richard worked with Presidents and Members of Con-

gress on both sides of the aisle to advance workers' rights. Richard approached legislation with clear intent, passion, and purpose, to ensure that no worker was left behind or abandoned.

Simply put, Rich Trumka's life was a testament to the amazing power behind organizing and fighting for progress. America's workers are better off, thanks to his many years rallying for those without a voice. I know his legacy will live on in all of us who he inspired.

With Richard's legacy in mind, I am recommitted, as are many of my colleagues, to creating a better America that lifts up working people and promotes a society that treats every person with kindness, dignity, and respect.

We now have an extraordinary opportunity, right now, to honor Richard, not just in words, but in deeds, by creating good-paying union jobs as part of the Build Back Better agenda. Let's get this done for him.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Madam Speaker, I have to say that this tribute to our great friend, Rich Trumka, would not be complete truly without hearing from the representative of his home district, his home area in Nemacolin, Pennsylvania.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. LAMB), my brother.

Mr. LAMB. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Michigan.

This is the mask of the Allegheny-Fayette Labor Council, which represents the coal miners that President Trumka loved so well.

Madam Speaker, before he was the president of the AFL-CIO and an internationally known figure, he was a western Pennsylvanian. Rich Trumka was a football player, a deer hunter, a member of a great family. What I respected about him so much is that the western Pennsylvania part of Rich Trumka never went away. It always shone through.

I heard him speak one time where he said one of the problems with our opponents in politics is that they want you to think the economy is just like the weather. It is just something that happens to people, and we might be able to predict it and prepare for it, but there is nothing we can do to change it.

He knew that in parts of the country, like ours in western Pennsylvania, people had heard versions of that for so long at such high volume with so much corporate money and messaging behind it that it threatened the basic fabric of our community.

The unions built the middle class not just in America but particularly in western Pennsylvania, and that has eroded over time. The benefits and the value of the labor movement have receded in a lot of people's minds. To me, the most western Pennsylvania thing about President Trumka was that he never gave up on it because he knew that our people never really accepted

the result of the recession of the labor movement, the inequality and injustice that has grown, the way so many of our towns have been hollowed out, and the way people looked to the future now sometimes with cynicism instead of optimism and hope.

Madam Speaker, to me, what he represented was that he really lived out the kind of abstract idea we have that the interests and the struggle of a coal miner can be the same as the interest and struggle as someone who works in home healthcare or someone who survived a nursing home during the pandemic working for less than \$15 an hour.

We have a lot of those in western Pennsylvania now. Healthcare is one of our biggest economic drivers, and those people are not paid well for the risks that they take and the hard, back-breaking work that they do.

Coal miners know something about that. I think that the best way we can honor President Trumka is to set aside some of the many differences that we have, even within the Democratic family and the labor family, and refocus ourselves on the core economic issues that tie together all the working- and middle-class people in this country that, themselves, represent such a powerful force that they really can't be stopped when people unite with each other.

Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. LEVIN for pulling this together, and may God protect Richard Trumka.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I thank Representative LAMB.

Madam Speaker, it is really fitting that we are honoring Rich Trumka during what has come to be called Striketober. This month has seen more workers in motion in more industries across more regions than at any time in modern history.

We have people in the healthcare industry, nurses, on strike.

We have miners in Alabama, members of Rich Trumka's home union, the United Mine Workers of America, toughing it out for a better life in their workplace.

We have agricultural and industrial workers.

We have workers like those at John Deere represented by the UAW striking for better conditions.

We had stage and production workers, members of IATSE, go right up to a strike deadline to demand a better and fairer contract.

We have food production workers, like those from Kellogg's, a company based in my home State of Michigan.

Rich Trumka knew that workers never want to go on strike, but the right to withhold your labor is a sacred right that every worker should possess, and it should be protected by law.

When he had to lead a strike, he showed that he was up to it in order to get fairness for workers he represented and workers all over this country.

Madam Speaker, I want to also mention—and Leader HOYER mentioned

this—that Rich's passing was so unexpected. A number of people have mentioned this. It was shocking to us because he seemed like such a strong, strong figure. It is hard to imagine him passing from the scene.

But I do have to commend the executive council of the AFL-CIO, the officers of the AFL-CIO, for carrying on. That is what we do in the labor movement. We carry on the struggle for justice, for the workers of this country, and in particular, Liz Shuler, who was chosen by the executive council to step up and become president for the remainder of Rich's term.

I have known Liz since she was an assistant to the president at IBEW back when Ed Hill was president there. She was a really important ally when I was on the AFL-CIO staff, and she was IBEW staff in those days, then her election as secretary-treasurer, her years of working with Rich Trumka. I didn't know what to do when he passed, on the morning that he passed, so I called Liz. She was heartbroken. Yet, she just immediately stood up and said we will not miss a beat. We will fight on for the workers of this country.

I know she will do a tremendous job in leading. She is a historic figure, as STENY HOYER said, the first woman to lead the national labor union movement in this country.

In terms of Rich, himself, and his passing and how we should take it, I want to quote the words of one of my favorite union songs called "I Dreamed I Saw Joe Hill Last Night," a song about a union leader who was murdered unjustly by the copper bosses. The premise of the song is Joe Hill appears to someone in a dream, and these lyrics say:

Joe Hill ain't dead, he says to me,
Joe Hill ain't never died.

And now I add working women.

Where working men are out on strike,

Joe Hill is at their side.

Joe Hill is at their side.

From San Diego up to Maine,

In every mine and mill,

Where workers strike and organize,

It's there you'll find Joe Hill.

It's there you'll find Joe Hill.

And Rich Trumka will be there with us in every labor struggle. His spirit, his militancy, his insistence on justice for working people will always be with us.

Madam Speaker, I yield to my good friend, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman LEVIN for the courtesy of yielding to me and for organizing this recognition for Richard Trumka.

As has been documented here on the floor this evening, he was truly a giant in terms of organized labor, for social justice, his passion, his energy. But I wanted to just note one item that I thought was really remarkable.

As I became chair of the Trade Subcommittee on Ways and Means, Mr. Trumka arranged for me to have lunch

with him and a half dozen different leaders, with six international union presidents talking about the need to be able to have a worker-centered trade policy.

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It was a remarkable exchange of ideas and opinions and commitments to work together. And we took a NAFTA agreement that could not pass on the floor of the House and worked together to be able to have a process that was worthy of support. There was nobody who was more essential to that than Richard Trumka, who was tireless in his efforts to make sure that that legislation moving forward would respect workers' rights, that we would deal with enforcement of labor agreements. They should be worth the paper they were printed on.

I'll go to my grave convinced that if we had had that opportunity earlier with the Obama administration, we wouldn't have had some of those concerns, we could have resolved issues of investor-state and worker rights.

Rich Trumka was tireless in terms of his determination. He was a tough negotiator. He was fair. He was honest. As I say, reaching out even to a new subcommittee chair. He took the time, brought people together so that we could fashion an area of common cause going forward.

It struck me, as the measure of the man, with all the things that were on his plate, that he would take the time to deal with these important details and be able to expose it to other labor leaders. It is the measure of his leadership, the legacy that he leaves, and we are all fortunate that we have had an opportunity to work with him over the years. He will be missed but his legacy will linger on.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GOTTHEIMER), another great colleague who knew Richard Trumka.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Richard Trumka, one of the most dedicated champions of labor and working families in our Nation's history. Like so many others—I don't have a photo like Andy has—but I will tell you, my moments in time where I got to speak to and visit with a legend were ones that are seared in my memory because he just brought out the best in everyone around him. The lives he impacted and the people he moved will never be forgotten.

We all know that he started his career as a union man in the mines in Pennsylvania, like his father and grandfather before him, working his way through college and law school as a miner.

After law school, instead of leaving the world he knew behind, Rich decided to use his skills to fight on behalf of it and dedicated the rest of his career to the labor movement, to the hard-working men and women of labor,

eventually becoming the president of the largest labor union in the United States of America.

He had an unrivaled sense of grit and determination that was paired with a deeply-held belief in the dignity of all work, and the rights of all workers. It was this combination that led him to spend his whole life fighting to ensure that every American worker has access to the wages, safety, healthcare, and finances that they deserve.

Rich spent every day pushing to ensure that the American worker could build a good and honorable middle class life through their own hard work. You could feel it when you spent time with him. He was just somebody who cared deeply about the people around him, and then making sure everyone's best days were ahead of them.

He was innovative and forward-thinking, constantly working to build an AFL-CIO for the 21st century. In fact, I argue that the AFL-CIO and the modern labor movement are what they are because of Mr. Trumka. The hard-working women and men of labor are better off, and our country is better off because of the legacy that he leaves behind.

He, in many ways, is irreplaceable and will be deeply missed by so many men and women across our country for so many years to come. We will never forget him. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a great leader, Richard Trumka.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I want to end, in the spirit of Rich Trumka, by thanking my legislative assistant, Meseret Araya, for doing an amazing job of organizing this Special Order and thanking all the staff who work the floor of the House of Representatives for doing such an amazing job of keeping this place running.

Madam Speaker, I want to say to Barbara and the whole Trumka family that we are so grateful to you for sharing this person with us, with the mine workers union and with all the unions of the AFL-CIO, and with all the workers of America and of this world.

Rich, we love you. You will be in our hearts forever. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, we lost a steadfast leader for hard-working families and people across the country in Richard Trumka.

A union worker himself, serving as the President of the United Mine Workers of America before becoming the President of AFL-CIO, he was a giant among labor leaders and advocates and never once backed down from fighting for workers' rights and speaking truth to power.

A steadfast champion for income equality, stronger benefits, and robust protections on the job, he knew that fighting for workers not only uplifts working families but drives our economy forward.

His commitment to a fair and just society that is built upon the foundation of a strong middle class and provides for each subsequent generation of workers remains unparalleled.

His passing is a profound loss for this movement, but his life and his determination serve as a role model for all of us to continue his critical work and remain dedicated to empowering and supporting workers and their families across the United States.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, today, we honor the life of a fearless labor leader, Richard Trumka. With his recent passing, the working people of America lost an outspoken, powerful voice.

Mr. Trumka dedicated his life and career to serving American workers. From his early days as a staff attorney for the United Mine Workers of America and throughout his tenure as President of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, he was a consistent champion for social and economic justice, fair wages, and safe working conditions—and our nation is better for it.

During my time in Congress, I had the pleasure of meeting with Mr. Trumka on several occasions to discuss the challenges facing American families and union workers, and to explore the ways in which we could lift up all people. He was a fierce advocate for policies that had the power to produce real, meaningful results that would improve countless lives.

Now more than ever, as our country and our economy grapple with the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will miss Mr. Trumka's presence in the fight to fully recover from the economic downturn and difficulties we've experienced, but we will never stop the work he started. The way to honor his memory is by empowering workers and the unions that represent them.

I offer my sincerest condolences to the family, friends, colleagues, and loved ones of Mr. Trumka during this time.

Mr. KAHELE. Madam Speaker, Mr. Richard Trumka blessed our nation with leadership, courage, and dignity, fighting for working men and women throughout his life. Born into a coal mining family in Nemacolin, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburg, Richard never forgot his working-class roots.

At the age of 19, Richard followed the footsteps of his father and grandfather—straight into the mine shafts, alternating several months below ground and several months in school. He graduated from Pennsylvania State and received a law degree from Villanova. Then for 13 years, he led the United Mine Workers of America as its elected president before bringing his staunch advocacy to the AFL-CIO, first as its secretary-treasurer, then as its president.

Many will remember Richard as a leader who opened the door of opportunity for millions of Americans. I, too, will remember Richard in the same vein. Today, Hawaii's working men and women share more of the nation's wealth because of Richard's leadership at the AFL-CIO.

I will also remember Richard for his fight for social and racial justice when in the early 1980s, he took a strong stand in solidarity with Black mineworkers in South Africa. Richard chaired the U.S. Boycott Committee, mobilized the support of other unions, and rallied opposition to apartheid. He urged the AFL-CIO to support the boycott against the Royal Dutch Shell, who, as he explained, was a critical multinational corporation propping up the South African government.

At a 1988 rally in Chicago, Richard stated that "true labor solidarity cannot be limited by national boundaries or the color of a person's skin. My opposition to apartheid comes not only from my personal beliefs and values, but is also deeply rooted in the history of my union."

Richard was a true traditional union leader who fought for economic, social, and racial justice for all. Richard stood for true solidarity. Looking upon us from above, Richard just might be saying, "Don't mourn, Organize!" Aloha oe, Richard. Mahalo for devoting your life to uplifting the lives of all Americans and working people throughout the world.

Mr. NORCROSS. Madam Speaker, today I pay tribute to my late friend, Rich Trumka.

Rich was a labor giant who dedicated his life to fighting for workers and giving them a voice.

His death was a huge and sudden loss for all of us, especially the working people of this country—even those who never knew him.

Rich was a friend to all, and many of us were lucky enough to know him personally.

I first met Rich at an AFL meeting in Cherry Hill, NJ, when I was a labor leader in South Jersey, and he was raising money for coalminers on strike back in the 80s.

From there, I was lucky to work with Rich for three decades, from his time with the Mineworkers to his leadership at AFL-CIO.

Rich improved the lives of workers by leading winning battles across the nation to secure better benefits, higher wages, and safer working conditions.

His memory will live on as he has set the stage for workers to lead the way in the economic recovery.

Specifically, Rich was a big proponent of the PRO Act, and now we will work to honor his legacy and ensure this critical piece of legislation becomes law. Because of Rich Trumka, the labor movement will forever be changed for the better.

We will continue to push forward and follow the path he paved for so many.

His steadfast leadership and powerful voice will be missed by all who had the honor to work with him.

My condolences go to his family, loved ones, and all who knew him.

VACCINATION MANDATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, I appreciate my colleagues' tribute to Mr. Trumka. Whether or not we always agree with every issue, it is always great to see a life that is being honored here on the floor of the House of Representatives. I appreciate that.

I appreciate his sentiments about staff and the hard work the staff carries out each and every day here on the floor of the House of Representatives, as well as in each of our offices. I join my colleague in each of those things.

Madam Speaker, I would note that in the context of supporting workers, supporting the people across this country who are indeed engaging right now in many respects in saying no and striking and deciding that they are not