

Though he has faced much adversity, he has managed to overcome it and use his experiences to create new standards in Nebraska's government. We thank him for his service and honor him for paving the way for all Native Americans.

OPPORTUNITY TO TRANSFORM THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, first, I offer my prayers and the prayers of the people of the Virgin Islands for the people of Puerto Rico after the devastation of Hurricane Fiona. My colleague across the aisle, Congresswoman GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, knows that, like so many other issues, she has my support.

Mr. Speaker, like many Virgin Islanders, September is a month forever etched in my mind. Five years ago on September 6, Hurricane Irma relentlessly pummeled the territory, and Virgin Islanders watched in mute shock as a Category 5 storm shredded roofs, uprooted trees, and shattered lives.

Then, 2 weeks after Hurricane Irma, 5 years ago today, Hurricane Maria made landfall. For hours that stretched into the early morning, another Category 5 hurricane brought destruction across parts of the island that had not been shredded by Irma.

The compounded impact of two Category 5 hurricanes is unfathomable. Virgin Islanders, undeterred by the dramatic scale of devastation, rallied in the face of tragedy and proceeded to rebuild their lives and our community.

Virgin Islanders banded together to deliver food and medical supplies, organize cleanup initiatives, and volunteer to transport people and goods between the multiple islands and Puerto Rico.

The response of this body, the House of Representatives, from leadership chairs to rank-and-file Members, was extraordinary. Ultimately, the dialogues and relentless advocacy were crucial to securing extraordinary funding and a significant change to the Stafford Act for the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico to not only provide necessary funding to rebuild but to rebuild with resiliency, to rebuild not as things were but as things should have been.

Despite the tremendous bipartisan funding, however, recovery stalled during the Trump administration due to, frankly, a belief by that administration that the funding was too much for the people of the Virgin Islands and not the financial responsibility of the Federal Government. Money was slow-walked.

Additionally, with the changes in law made by this Congress to allow the Virgin Islands to rebuild to prevailing industry standards, HUD, and especially FEMA, have had difficulty at the regional and local levels in accepting and implementing the changes in standards.

In view of this and unnecessary government bureaucracy, I coauthored the Expediting Disaster Recovery Act, a bipartisan disaster relief bill, with my colleague Representative GARRET GRAVES, which expedites the allocation of additional funds and assistance to cover unmet needs.

Our isolation from the mainland and relatively small size created difficulty in obtaining supplies and workers, and the decision to report in to Puerto Rico added another layer of bureaucracy, further hindering the speed of rebuilding.

I must be transparent by recognizing that, unfortunately, local government exacerbated the slow pace of the rebuild. The unprecedented funding was not met with sufficient macro planning. We did not use the first years after the storm and still have not sufficiently built capacity—training individuals while paying them to meet construction and project management demands, developing integrated fund and project management systems, aggressively recruiting experienced Virgin Islanders to return home to advance the rebuild, and educating the people to be prepared for spending the massive funding.

Fortunately, there is a window of opportunity to jump-start this rebuild while Democrats remain in the majority, our President prioritizes resiliency in underserved areas that are particularly vulnerable to climate change, and our local and Federal elected officials maintain transparency and cooperation to advance this once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform the Virgin Islands.

I am continually encouraged by the grit and heroism exhibited by my people, the people of the Virgin Islands, who face the grueling task of rebuilding their lives with sheer tenacity and determination.

Together, we have a shared responsibility to safeguard the future of these islands by ensuring that the Virgin Islands remain stronger and more resilient from the twin tragedies of back-to-back Category 5 storms. The opportunity that lies before us is too great and meaningful to let pass by.

RECOGNIZING STATE SENATOR SHEILA MCNEILL

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of State Senator Sheila McNeill, who is retiring after many excellent years in service to the city of Brunswick and to the State of Georgia.

Senator McNeill is a longtime supporter of our country's Armed Forces, having served for 2 years educating citizens and elected officials on the importance of seapower as the first woman to ever lead the Navy League, but her support for America's sailors didn't stop there.

In 1996, Senator McNeill played a key role in establishing St. Mary's Submarine Museum, the largest museum of its kind in the South.

During her tenure as a State senator, Sheila sponsored legislation to fight Georgia's human trafficking crisis and the pernicious effects of homelessness and sponsored countless bills to improve our State's educational infrastructure.

Sheila will be retiring at the end of her term this year to support her husband of over six decades. We thank her for everything she has done for our Armed Forces, for students, and for the many Georgians she has served over the years.

Her career has been a long and impressive one, and we were so lucky to have such a talented woman fighting for such important causes.

RECOGNIZING IAN GALLAGHER

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the bravery of Ian Gallagher, a Rincon police officer who stepped up when help was needed most.

On a bright morning this June, the city of Rincon was hosting their annual Let Freedom Ring Parade, which I was proud to be a part of. A crowd of hundreds of people was gathered along either side of the parade route to watch the spectacle.

Around this time, Officer Gallagher heard calls over the radio that the roadblock, which had been set up, had been breached by an erratically driving car. He looked and saw an SUV speeding down the route, only just missing onlookers, including myself.

Shouting to those along the road to back up to safety, knowing that he must do something to stop the driver, he kept his patrol car behind a fire truck. Just before the suspect's car passed him, he pulled out directly into its path, stopping the driver in a head-on collision. His act of selfless bravery and split-second heroism undoubtedly saved many lives that day.

While this head-on collision was dangerous and surely jarring, both Officer Gallagher and his canine officer, who was with him at the time of the incident, are on their way to a full recovery.

He has recently been awarded the Medal of Valor, the Nation's highest award of valor for a public safety official.

I, alongside the people of the First Congressional District of Georgia, thank him for his service and his selflessness.

HONORING RON AND SANDRA ELLIOTT

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Ron and Sandra Elliott, owners of Game Changers Running Company.

Since the store's founding in 2012, Game Changers has been so much more than just a place to get your running shoes. Under the leadership of Ron and Sandra Elliott, Game Changers has been committed to the health and fitness of Georgia's coastal region.

As a physical therapist-owned establishment, Game Changers understands the importance of community health and wellness. They have heavily invested in their community through various educational programs and running clinics, as well as financial contributions to local charities.

Since their doors first opened, Game Changers has been able to donate over \$250,000 to local organizations to help transform coastal Georgia's mindset about running and physical well-being.

Ron and Sandra's service to their community and their country began long before Game Changers opened its doors, having both served in the military.

Ron and Sandra, thank you for what you have done for our community through Game Changers. You have more than earned a relaxing and restful retirement.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING DON HOGAN

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor my good friend, Don Hogan, as he retires from public service.

Don graduated from Georgia Southern University and then attended the University of Georgia, graduating with a master's degree in education. He committed himself to a career in the rehabilitation field, where he specialized in mental health, substance abuse, and developmental disabilities.

In Brunswick and St. Simons, he has been known as a leader in civic involvement and community service. During his 2-year term on the Glynn County Board of Commissioners, he served as both vice chairman and chairman.

Most recently, he has served in the Georgia State House of Representatives, representing the 179th District.

Additionally, his philanthropic passions have impacted his community in ways that will be felt for years. He has served as area commissioner for Boy Scouts of America, as well as on the advisory council of the Coastal Area Planning and Development Commission, Goodwill Industries, and Glynn County School's special instruction.

The sacrifice that every public servant makes, alongside their family, is admirable and has no small impact on their life. I am very grateful for the inspirational leadership and servitude Don has displayed throughout his life.

I, on behalf of the great people in the First Congressional District of Georgia, take this moment to honor Representative Don Hogan and his legacy.

CONSERVING ENERGY SAVES MONEY

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

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, this month, Californians have faced one of the hottest and longest heat waves on record. From Sacramento to San Diego, families have suffered triple-digit temperatures.

These extreme temperatures put an enormous strain on our electrical grid. It is urgent that Americans increase the energy efficiency of our homes.

Fortunately, the Inflation Reduction Act makes this transition easier and cheaper. Thanks to this new law, which I helped pass, families can get new tax credits and rebates for installing energy-efficient products in their homes, including windows, water heaters, and heating and cooling systems. I recently welcomed Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm to visit an Orange County family saving money on utilities with efficient appliances.

As the climate crisis continues to harm communities, the Inflation Reduction Act delivers relief. We can conserve energy and save families money at the same time.

NURSING HOMES AREN'T COMMODITIES

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to champion protecting our seniors.

Wall Street shouldn't get to decide if older Americans can age with dignity. But across the country, private equity firms are spending billions to turn nursing homes into commodities.

When private equity firms take over nursing homes, they cut costs and cut corners; they lay off trusted staff; and they stretch care workers too thin to provide the care and attention older Americans need. Quality of care declines, and deaths among residents rise dramatically.

We cannot entrust our loved ones to these bad actors. They focus on maximizing returns for investors at the expense of delivering protected care to seniors, their patients.

I have long pushed to hold private equity accountable and to end corporate abuse in healthcare. The health and well-being of our seniors are not for sale.

CLIMATE CRISIS IS A HEALTH CRISIS

Ms. PORTER. The climate crisis is a health crisis.

This month, high temperatures threaten the well-being of Californians. For some, it was a matter of life and death.

In the past decade alone, extreme heat has killed 3,900 Californians. We know who dies from extreme heat.

□ 1045

Older Americans die in homes they can't afford to keep cool. Workers die in the sun, doing jobs they can't afford to lose.

After years of ignoring the climate crisis, our Nation has finally directed resources to fighting climate change. Green investments in the Inflation Reduction Act will help older adults live longer and avoid heat-related health emergencies. They will protect our children from wildfire smoke that causes chronic breathing conditions. And by contributing to a healthier workforce, they will keep our economy strong.

BROADBAND COMPETITION

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, the ability to shop for the best deal is funda-

mental to a free market economy. Yet, for years, many people in apartments and office buildings have been stuck with only one option for internet.

Service providers have unfairly locked out competitors by securing exclusivity agreements with landlords. Tenants are trapped into one choice for broadband, whether they are getting a fair deal or whether they are getting ripped off.

Allowing big corporations to gatekeep the market is not healthy capitalism. I have previously pushed for the Federal Communications Commission to crack down on abusive Internet Service Providers. I am pleased that the FCC unanimously adopted new rules this year to end these predatory agreements.

Strengthening competition for broadband is proven to lower costs, improve service, and promote innovation. Americans should have the freedom to choose the internet plan that is best for them.

CRISIS AT OUR SOUTHERN BORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss the crisis at our southern border and to call for this body to immediately take up the Border Security Act of America that will restore order; that will enhance technology; and that will give our Customs and Border Protection agents the tools that they are begging for.

A year ago last March, I actually went where the President and our Vice President refuse to go: to the southern border, Rio Grande. And if you talk to the CBP agents there, they will tell you exactly what is going on.

We are seeing our southern border overrun by the drug cartels. We are seeing human trafficking take place. We are seeing and hearing from children who are being abused along the journey, and the amount of fentanyl and other drugs that are streaming over our border and killing Americans is at record levels. It could be stopped today, but this administration and this Congress refuse to do it.

The issue of public safety and national security is one we just discussed last week, September 11; we said we will never forget. But yet, here we have policies in place that make us less safe and could potentially cause something catastrophic to happen.

We need to be wise. We need to be reasonable. We are a nation of immigrants. We are a compassionate nation. My mother is a Cuban refugee. My father is a Greek immigrant.

It is not about that. It is about having order. It is about having laws. It is about having policies in place and making sure that they are being followed.

We know that 66 suspected terrorists were apprehended attempting to cross