

if their child married a Republican, and 35 percent of Republicans said they would be unhappy if their child married a Democrat.

Well, the reasons are manifold. Americans today read less print than ever before. They can now pick and choose their own news, perspectives, and facts. Cable news channels have moved further to the extremes to keep their audiences engaged. When we all read news designed to affirm our own thoughts, we lose empathy and understanding of how other people come to their decisions.

We must each take responsibility for broadening our sources. You don't have to seek out the opinions of extremists to do this. Seeking out balanced news and news sources, supporting local news, and not rewarding so-called hot takes with money and clicks can all get us closer to a return to more fact-based news.

The rise of social media has also heightened tensions and encouraged extremism to flourish. In an environment where the loudest voices rise to the top, it is all too easy for politicians and elected officials to begin believing that they, too, must be the loudest, most extreme voice.

The words of our leaders have always carried significant weight, but in today's world of heightened tensions, they have even more ability to shape the perceptions of our citizens. As leaders, we have a responsibility to cool the temperature of public discourse. Instead, many conservative speakers have chosen to ramp up the temperature and exploit the tensions that exist.

Dangerous, polarizing rhetoric is not the answer. It is poison. Ultimately, we have a responsibility to lead through example in how we address one another.

At the time of our greatest division, the President stressed the importance of leading "with malice toward none, with charity for all."

As John Adams said: "I fear that in every [elected office,] members will obtain an influence by noise, not sense; by meanness, not greatness; by ignorance, not learning. . . . There must be a decency and respect."

There must be decency and respect on both sides.

Gerrymandering has also played a role in our national polarization. Let's look at it. Between our two parties, only about 60 of the 435 seats in this House are truly contested in general elections. A lack of true swing districts means that candidates are driven to the polls to win their primaries and that fewer are concerned about appealing to the center in a general election. As a result, items that were once non-partisan have become bitterly so, issues like funding the government, violence prevention, trade, and even raising the debt ceiling.

Now, finding common ground on core issues can be nearly impossible. Dis-mantling gerrymandered districts can

help put our country on the path of depolarization and produce a Congress and State legislatures that are more reflective of the majority of Americans' views.

Our country has faced deep, polarizing challenges before. To put our current moment in perspective, let's look back at the words of the President who guided our country through the most divided of times.

In a January 1838 speech in Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln said: "At what point, then, is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher."

We must heed the call to action from these words. We must change how we address our country, how we are elected, how we speak to each other, and how we learn and get informed. We must all learn that empathy and compromise should be commended, not condemned. Our success or failure will determine if "any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure."

#### TREATING AND REDUCING OBESITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, as a physician, I believe that we must support and utilize available medical breakthroughs. That is why I am proud to co-lead the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act, legislation that would provide a direct line to chronic weight management medications for Medicare recipients struggling with obesity.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, obesity is prevalent in over 40 percent of adults aged 60 and older. The National Institutes of Health attributes obesity to an increased risk for health problems such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, liver disease, and certain cancers.

This bill would assist those struggling to lose weight and would help decrease comorbidities associated with obesity. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

#### ACCELERATING ACCESS TO CARE FOR CHILDREN

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act.

Iowa's First District is blessed to have the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital, and this bill would allow out-of-State children to access our top-tier clinical trials, specialists, and care teams.

Currently, children enrolled in Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program must have an out-of-State care team be screened by their home State's Medicaid program, even though the providers have already been screened and enrolled in their own State program. This causes delays and

can cause a child's condition to worsen, putting their lives at risk.

This legislation would streamline the process by allowing providers who treat children and are in good standing to enroll in multiple State Medicaid programs for a period of 5 years.

As a mother, physician, former director of the Iowa Department of Public Health, and a Congresswoman, I understand the duty to care for our children's health, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

#### REMEMBERING BURLINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT K9 OFFICER PACO

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Burlington Police Department's K9 Paco.

K9 Paco served with the Burlington Police Department for nearly 2 months and was in the process of being trained for assignment as our second K9 unit with K9 Handler Officer Gallegos.

K9s are specifically trained to help members of our law enforcement, and their keen sense of tracking and detection are invaluable for officers.

This is a sad day for the Burlington Police Department, and I will continue to keep the Burlington Police Department and Paco in my prayers.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF GLORIA MOLINA

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Gloria Molina, a trailblazer for Latino politicians.

Gloria fiercely served and advocated for the communities she represented, for the city of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, and the State of California. She passed away in her home, surrounded by her loving family, on May 14, at the age of 74.

Gloria was raised in an immigrant household with her nine siblings. Her father, Leonardo, was a construction worker born in Los Angeles but raised in Casas Grandes, Mexico. Her mother, Concepcion, was a homemaker from Mexico. Together, her parents immigrated to the U.S. in the 1940s. Gloria was the oldest of 10 children. As she did everything in life, she led by example and helped wherever and whenever she could.

Gloria's commitment to public service began during President Jimmy Carter's administration, where she served as a deputy for Presidential Personnel and soon after that with the San Francisco Department of Health and Human Services.

Gloria's activism was sparked by the Chicano movement, as she was a woman of firsts. Gloria was first elected to office in 1982, when she became the first Latina elected to the California State Assembly. Some people made the mistake of underestimating Gloria's commitment to her community and her tenacity. She beat the establishment candidate.

In 1987, Gloria ran for the Los Angeles City Council seat that had been redistricted, becoming the first woman councilmember of Mexican ancestry to serve on the Los Angeles City Council.

In 1991, she was elected and became the first Latina member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. She was known as a fiscal watchdog committed to governance reforms, protecting public healthcare, and fighting for quality-of-life issues for millions of residents.

Throughout more than 30 years as an elected official, Gloria changed the landscape of Los Angeles, putting an end to a 100-year pattern of dumping negative land-use developments on the east side of Los Angeles. Her work in East LA resulted in the Los Angeles Metro Board of Directors naming a train station in her honor.

Gloria worked with Mothers of East Los Angeles, a group that organized against and successfully defeated the proposal to build a prison in East Los Angeles.

Gloria valued the power of storytelling through art. She founded the historical LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes and the Eastside Arts Initiative, which provides financial support to community-based organizations.

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Thanks to her love of quilting, Gloria founded the quilting group the East L.A. Stitchers, so that others could express themselves through this art form.

Gloria successfully advocated for increased access to parks and green spaces, as well as culturally engaging recreational areas. The motion to rename Grand Park to the Gloria Molina Grand Park was approved and will allow Gloria's legacy and impact to live on in projects that she fought so hard to create.

On top of green and recreational spaces, Gloria constantly fought for the improvement of women's rights and representation. She would regularly fight against the construction of projects that would disrupt predominantly Chicano and Mexican neighborhoods.

On top of her work in politics in the mid-2000s, she would drive around through Skid Row in her free time looking for children living in unsafe conditions so that she could call the Department of Family and Children Services to find them a home.

She led a program that was later named the Gloria Molina Foster Youth Education Program, with the sole purpose of being able to increase the high school graduation rates of students in foster care systems.

As its leader, she and the program did just that and elevated graduation rates from the national average of 58 percent to an amazing 80 percent. One of her final statements as she retired was that she only regretted not being able to raise the average even more.

Gloria stood as a constant beacon of hard work, perseverance, and

strength—a role model to Latinas looking to succeed in politics, and a role model to everyone.

Gloria taught us all to fight for those without a voice and to let our passion drive our success. Her impact will be felt for generations to come.

Gloria is survived by her daughter, Valentina; son-in-law, Brendan; grandchildren, Santiago and Ximena; nine siblings; nieces; nephews; Ron Martinez; and many die-hard Molinistas.

#### FULFILLING OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR COUNTRY'S VETERANS

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

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans are fulfilling our commitment to our country's veterans by fully funding veterans' healthcare programs, veterans' benefits, and Veterans Affairs programs in the fiscal year 2024 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

Not only are we fulfilling our promise to those veterans who have served our country, but we are taking our efforts up a notch to go above and beyond what the VA is already doing by increasing funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical and Prosthetic Research Program.

I am a proud supporter of this program, and I requested that the Appropriations Committee fully fund this program to the level included in the bill, which is \$938 million. That is a \$22 million or 2.5 percent increase as compared to fiscal year 2023 and is in line with the President's budgetary request.

The VA's Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service is the largest and most comprehensive provider of prosthetic devices and sensory aids in the world. This funding will go a long way in making sure the VA has the necessary funds to research ways to restore veterans' abilities to function within their families, communities, and workplaces.

This increased funding will also help the researchers within the VA research program recover from slowed research because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sustained and predictable funding growth for VA research is imperative to help ensure the best return on spending to improve the health of veterans and all Americans.

Although the VA's Medical and Prosthetic Research Program is specifically dedicated to improving the health and well-being of those who have served the United States in uniformed services, it has had a tremendous impact on the care of all Americans.

The research conducted within this program has led the way in many different healthcare fields, including the treatment of digestive diseases. There is no better way to utilize our tax dollars than by contributing to a cause that will help restore veterans' functionality and also lead to advancements in medical care for all Americans.

Additionally, the Vanderbilt University Medical Center, which has direct ties to my district and constituents, has a proud, longstanding, and multifaceted partnership with the Veterans Administration in Nashville and the mid-South across clinical care, medical training, and research activities. They are proud to join me in supporting increased funding for this medical research program within the VA healthcare system.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that medical research at the VA not only helps those that have put it all on the line in service to this country—some sacrificing pieces of their body that they will never get back—it helps all Americans, as I have already mentioned. This is a great use of taxpayer funds, and I couldn't be prouder to support this initiative to fund this program at the level I have already mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members on both sides of the aisle to support this provision in the fiscal year 2024 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

#### STORIES OF SERVICEMEMBERS

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

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I stand here to recognize some of Virginia's many proud veterans and military families. One of my most powerful memories of my late grandfather was when I took him to the World War II Memorial and had the opportunity to stand with him on the side marked Pacific and hear some of his stories from his time in service. These are stories that he, throughout my childhood, never shared, but at that memorial chose to share with me.

As a Representative for Virginia's Seventh District and as a Representative of many military families and veterans, I ensure that I am giving a voice and putting into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD some of the extraordinary stories of service that we have throughout our district.

Earlier this year, I reached out to Virginians across the Seventh District asking them to share stories of service to recognize their loved ones who answered the call or share their own experiences. I heard from people across the Seventh District, and I was proud to share some of those stories in May during Military Appreciation Month, and I will continue to do so into the future.

Kenneth J. Schmidt from Prince William County shared the long record of service in his family, writing "My family is a proud military one. Our father served during World War I. Seven brothers-in-law, two cousins, and my oldest brother served during World War II. My other brother and I served during the Korean war. Army, Navy, Air Force, we were there."