

year, visitors from across the country visit the Chase County Courthouse to admire its architectural design, stonework, and spiral staircase.

Standing 113 feet tall, this iconic structure can be seen from many vantage points across the county and most prominently in the heart of downtown Cottonwood Falls.

Unmatched in durability and design, the courthouse remains a living tribute to its builders and the Flint Hills pioneers who envisioned a courthouse that would stand and be of service to its residents for well over a century.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the county commissioners, members of the committee, and the entire Chase County community as they prepare to celebrate 150 years of their historic courthouse.

SUPPORTING UKRAINE

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, when Vladimir Putin and his autocratic regime launched their brutal criminal invasion of Ukraine in February of last year, many people predicted that the Ukrainians would throw down their arms and surrender within days.

Mr. Speaker, 18 months later, however, burnt-out husks of Russian tanks litter the Ukrainian countryside. Blue and gold flags fly proudly over Kyiv, Kherson, Lyman, and other towns held or liberated by Ukrainian forces. Russian soldiers surrender, desert, and dodge conscription in droves.

Meanwhile, defenders of democracy stand firm with Ukrainian courage in their hearts and Western weapons in their hands. Ukrainians stand strong because Americans and Brits and Danes and Germans and French and other freedom-loving peoples around the world stand united behind them. That unity is crucial now more than ever as the warmongering dictators of the world—Vladimir Putin, Kim Jong-un, and Xi Jinping—have all come together.

We are locked in a struggle between freedom and fascism, democracy and despotism, might and right. The war in Ukraine is that struggle manifest.

President Zelenskyy returns to our Capitol this week, tomorrow, to remind us that the fate not only of this sovereign, democratic nation but of the free world hinges on this conflict. He recognizes that our international cooperation to preserve democracy depends on our cooperation here in the Congress of the United States.

Democrats and Republicans have found consensus on the issue in the past, securing vital military and humanitarian aid for Ukraine. We must keep working in a bipartisan fashion to ensure that Ukrainians receive whatever tools and resources they need to succeed on the battlefield because only the great arsenal of democracy, as we said during World War II, can vanquish an axis of evil.

I echo what President Truman said to the Congress in 1952 when trying to secure further aid for war-torn Europe. He said this: "If through inaction we desert the cause of democracy, the democratic hope may be exterminated in broad areas of the Earth." We must not let that happen.

President Truman called on Congress, as I urge you now, to add powerful momentum to the democratic counteroffensive, which inspires in the people of the world a sense of their own destiny as free men and women.

We have built up that momentum steadily over the last year and a half. Imagine how much more it will grow in the months ahead if the free world maintains its resolve, if this Congress maintains its resolve.

When President Zelenskyy arrives in our Capitol corridors tomorrow, he should not have to plead for more support. Instead, we ought to show him that we are committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure that action prevails over inaction, that democracy triumphs over autocracy, and that Ukraine emerges victorious over Russia.

Like the martyrs who gave their lives on the Lexington Common in 1775 and Kyiv's Maidan in 2014, we will show the world that we will do everything to protect our democratic principles.

If we are to defend democracy at home and around the world, if we are to defeat the despots, dictators, and dealers of destruction, then we, Ukraine, and the free world must stand as one.

Our words supporting freedom will ring very hollow if not coupled with our actions to defend freedom, as President Kennedy said, "here and around the world." Let us defend the democracy that we hold so dear.

HONORING GOLD STAR FAMILY REMEMBRANCE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, this week is Gold Star Family Remembrance Week. Every September, Gold Star Family Remembrance Week takes place on the week leading up to Gold Star Mother's Day, which has been observed by Presidential proclamation since 1936 on the last Sunday of September.

The Gold Star symbol first originated in 1917 when the United States began its involvement in World War I. Families would hang banners to represent a family member in the armed services. If the family member died in combat, the family would change the banner from a blue star to a gold star.

We will never know the exact number of Gold Star families. However, accordingly to the National Gold Star Family Registry, at least 472,251 fallen military members are registered by loved ones. At least 36,548 of those service-

members have been registered in my home State of Pennsylvania.

As an Army dad, I am blessed my son returned home. I am aware that this is not the case for all families, and we must take the time to remember, respect, and honor the families of our fallen servicemembers.

To honor and remember our fallen servicemembers and their families, I look forward to supporting efforts such as the Gold Star Family Remembrance Week. This week recognizes the loss and sacrifices of families in support of fallen members of the Armed Forces, as well as veterans.

I look forward to supporting legislative efforts to honor this occasion and encourage fellow Americans to perform acts of community service and goodwill to honor these families.

Our servicemembers are the bravest among us. They answer the call to protect and defend our Nation in times of war and in times of peace.

This important week is a time to remember the families of the brave men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our freedom.

Madam Speaker, let us take a moment to remember that our freedom is not free. We cannot begin to imagine the loss and pain that these families have experienced.

Gold Star families have lost a loved one in the name of protecting our freedom, and they deserve our gratitude every day.

RECOGNIZING DAVID HECKER

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

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, in his 22 years of service as the president of the American Federation of Teachers of Michigan, David Hecker has been consistent in his commitment to working families, our teachers, and our education system, especially public education.

Mr. Hecker became a member of AFT in 1977 and has served as the AFT president in Michigan since 2001. AFT Michigan, Madam Speaker, has 35,000 members who are educators and healthcare providers working in K-12 as well as intermediate schools, community colleges, universities, and hospitals across the State of Michigan.

During his tenure, AFT Michigan has organized many new locals representing thousands of new members, particularly in higher education and healthcare.

Mr. HECKER is a lifelong labor leader committed to working families and worker rights and building a stronger labor movement. For many years, David has been a member of the Michigan State AFL-CIO and Metro Detroit's AFL-CIO executive committees.

I am blessed to call David a friend. Please join me in recognizing his 22 years of public service and commitment to improving the lives of teachers across Michigan as we wish him well in his retirement.

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CONGRATULATING STEVE DENSMORE ON HIS
RETIREMENT

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I recognize Assistant Fire Chief and Melvindale City Council member Steve Densmore for his 27 years of service with the Dearborn Fire Department in Michigan's 12th District Strong.

Assistant Fire Chief Densmore got his start in public service in 1996, Madam Speaker, and he was instrumental during many difficult times in our community. He helped lead the effort with the COVID vaccine clinic, the handling of two federally declared disasters, multiple commercial fires, and other emergency incidents.

He has been recognized numerous times for saving lives and his commitment to our community. Over the course of his career, Assistant Chief Densmore showed his unwavering commitment through his achievements that include numerous certification programs and various rescue operations, techniques, and other technical programming.

Assistant Chief Densmore has been an outstanding public servant, so please join me in recognizing his 27 years of commitment to protecting our families across Michigan's 12th District as we wish him well in his retirement.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF ROCIO OCAMPO

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, today I recognize a dear friend, Rocio Ocampo, a community mother, whose contributions had an enormous impact on the families of southwest Detroit, as we honor her memory.

I first met Rocio when I served in Michigan's State Legislature at a parent advocacy meeting at Phoenix Elementary School. I was instantly impressed by Rocio. She was tenacious, and she had a drive to pursue a better quality of life and future for all children.

She was involved in numerous community organizations, serving on the board of Urban Neighborhood Initiatives as well as the City of Detroit's Property Assessment Board of Review, as well as a Parent Teacher Association member at her children's school. Rocio's active involvement in our community was marked by her dedication not only to making it a safer and healthier place to live, but to making it a more beautiful place to thrive.

Above all, Rocio loved her children and her grandchildren deeply. Her love extended out to the children of the neighborhood where she lived. She could always be counted on for a kind word, warmth, and generosity of spirit.

Rocio Ocampo's vibrant presence will be sorely missed. Please join me in recognizing her contributions and services as we honor her memory.

RECOGNIZING MARSHA BRUHN

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of Marsha Bruhn, a public servant and longtime resident of Detroit, Michigan's 12th Congressional District, for her numerous outstanding

contributions to the city as well as the Grandmont Rosedale community she calls home.

Madam Speaker, before settling in Detroit's Grandmont Rosedale community, Ms. Bruhn lived all over the country. She developed her passion for community development when she volunteered with the Staten Island Citizens Planning Commission. The community engagement work she witnessed while later living in Los Angeles spurred her to return to school to complete her master's degree in urban planning. She used that experience and education over 22 years of service as the director of the Detroit Planning Commission.

We were really, really blessed that she chose to live in our community in Detroit's North Rosedale Park neighborhood. She quickly became a champion of North Rosedale Park and the entire neighborhood area that comprises Grandmont Rosedale.

Ms. Bruhn has contributed immensely to strengthening housing and retaining and attracting small businesses that are the backbone of our community's corridor. She spearheaded the capital campaign to revitalize the North Rosedale Park Community House. I thank Ms. Bruhn and recognize her dedication and thank her for her commitment.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF TIM
GUYER

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

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize fallen Johnson County Deputy Sheriff Tim Guyer, who passed away at Indiana Law Enforcement Academy last month.

Deputy Guyer was training at the academy and set to graduate just 2 weeks after he passed. We will never forget his service and sacrifice to our Indiana community, and I extend my deepest condolences to his loved ones.

RURAL HEALTHCARE IN RUSHVILLE, INDIANA

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about my recent visit to Rush Memorial Hospital in Rushville, Indiana. During the visit, we discussed the current state of rural healthcare and what can be done to improve it.

I also got to meet and speak with the outstanding stat flight team, who deliver timely and critical care to those in need throughout the southern Indiana district.

I really enjoyed my visit to the hospital and thank the entire team at Rush Memorial Hospital for all they do and for their hospitality.

PUT AMERICA'S INTERESTS FIRST

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concern with President Biden's decision to hand over \$6 billion to Iran, the largest sponsor of terrorism, as part of a ransom deal on the anniversary of 9/11.

September 11 is a day where we should be remembering the Americans

who lost their lives, honoring our first responders, and praying for the families who lost a loved one. The Biden administration's decision to broker a deal with terrorists on 9/11 is tone deaf, shameful, and desecrates the day.

Additionally, this deal emboldens our enemies, puts our Nation's safety and security at risk, and will ultimately fund anti-American terrorist activities. It is time for President Biden to stand up to our adversaries and put America's interests first.

SERVING VETERANS IN SHELBY COUNTY

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the opening of the new Department of Veterans Affairs clinic in Shelbyville, Indiana.

The clinic offers primary and mental health care, optometry services, and physical therapy.

I thank the VA, the director of Veteran Health Indiana, Michael Hershman; the dedicated onsite clinical team; and Shelbyville Mayor Tom DeBaun for their efforts in getting this new facility open to serve Hoosier veterans throughout Shelby County and beyond.

SLOW DOWN ELECTRIFICATION-OR-NOTHING
APPROACH

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about my takeaways from a roundtable I attended with Hoosier stakeholders in Franklin, Indiana.

At the roundtable, research universities such as Purdue University and Vincennes University, along with the State of Indiana parking and mobility experts, and EV charging station developers joined together in Indiana's Sixth District to share lessons learned and best practices for the electrification policy.

We also discussed why the current timelines and excessive regulations of the Biden administration are far ahead of what is possible, practical, and of course affordable. This roundtable just further proved that it is time for the Biden administration to slow down their electrification-or-nothing approach.

ELECTRIC GRID RELIABILITY

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share my concerns about our Nation's electric grid reliability.

Our electric grid is on an unsustainable path, and if we do not change our direction now, we could be heading toward a catastrophic failure in the future. In fact, this month, for the first time ever, NERC has identified certain energy policies as the major threat to our grid's reliability. These policies include increased usage of electric vehicles, as well as reliance on wind and solar energy.

Yet, the Biden administration and far-left Democrats continue to try to push their rush-to-green energy agenda and force electrification of everything from cars to stoves. It is past time for this administration to face reality and put our Nation on a sustainable path forward to ensure the American people are able to keep their lights on.