

a mother in my district who recently lost her son to gun violence.

She called my office after seeing those Members, distraught by their casual cruelty and their dangerous promotion of violence.

I rise today as the voice in Congress for that brokenhearted mother to make this very clear: House Democrats are united in the fight to end senseless gun violence. We want to advance real solutions, and we will always stand up to extremist behavior that threatens the safety of our communities.

□ 1015

RECOGNIZING BETSY WALLS, PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAILBLAZER

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a constituent whose decades of public health service have made our community stronger.

Betsy Walls is being recognized by the CDC and Prevention as a public health emergency preparedness trailblazer from Pennsylvania. She is one of 48 Americans being recognized for their tireless work to protect our communities from a range of public health threats.

Betsy's distinguished career in serving her community includes serving as a flight nurse for the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, where she retired as a lieutenant colonel; she spent 30 years at Delaware County Memorial Hospital, first as a staff nurse, then a head nurse, then an evening supervisor, and, finally, as director of staff education; and she served as director of personal health at the Chester County Health Department for 18 years.

Betsy's commitment to ensuring our community is ready and able to respond to disasters has touched thousands of lives. Our community owes Betsy Walls an enormous debt of gratitude for the strong foundation she has built to keep our communities strong and healthy for years to come.

RECOGNIZING PHILADELPHIA EAGLES CHANGEMAKER AWARD WINNER, DR. RUTH ABAYA

Ms. SCANLON. The Philadelphia Eagles are headed to the Super Bowl this weekend, and I want to recognize the team's 2022 Inspire Change Changemaker Award winner, Dr. Ruth Abaya, an emergency physician at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and a scholar of the hospital's Center for Violence Prevention.

As our country works to tackle gun violence, Dr. Abaya is on the front lines, treating this issue like the public health crisis that it is.

In her role as program manager for the Injury Prevention Program at Philadelphia's Department of Health, she is helping to identify the most promising practices for violence prevention and intervention for young people in our region.

A public health approach to gun violence requires a comprehensive, multifaceted response driven by research and data. It means a focus on prevention, in addition to treatment. Dr. Abaya's work is moving us toward the solutions

we need to face this crisis head-on and give our children brighter futures.

I am grateful for Dr. Abaya's dedication to making our community a safer place for everyone and to the Philadelphia Eagles for their support for her program.

This weekend, go Birds.

A FRIEND CLOSER THAN A BROTHER

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

Mr. SELF. Mr. Speaker, Jesus said: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

These words guided the life of the late Sam Johnson who served the great State of Texas 27 years in this House, 6 years in the Texas House, and nearly 7 years as a POW in the infamous Alcatraz annex of the Hanoi Hilton.

Mr. Speaker, if you had the honor to shake Sam's broken hand, then you felt the permanent damage that he endured for our Nation. Sam Johnson laid down his life for his friends throughout his life. It is an honor to serve in the House seat where he honorably served.

Those words of Jesus guided me through my military career and through my introduction to the 118th Congress that first week, and they will continue to guide me just as they did my friend Sam Johnson.

Our Nation is facing tremendous uncertainty. Misguided policies are causing inflation, incentivizing criminals, promoting out-of-control spending, and projecting America as weak on the world stage.

Now is the time for Congress to restore fiscal restraint, embrace family values, offer certainty to our citizens, and stand firm against tyranny that encroaches on freedom around the world.

There is a model for our Nation's leaders to follow. The Texas model provides a roadmap to guide this House in its effort to restore America's future.

The Texas economy ranked ninth of all nations by GDP, ahead of countries like Canada, Australia, and Russia. The Texas delegation in Congress has the most Republican Members because people are flocking to Texas for economic prosperity, improved quality of life, and greater opportunity. That description is the American Dream. But that dream should not be limited by geography.

Everything that is right about America can be found in Texas: from the feedlots in the panhandle where I grew up to ports along the Gulf Coast, from farms in the Rio Grande Valley to the piney woods of east Texas, and from the oil patch to military bases scattered across the State. Texas has agriculture, manufacturing, finance, defense, and tourism. Big cities and small towns—Texas has it all.

Unfortunately, we also feel the pain of what is wrong with America: a flood

of illegal immigrants crossing our border along with drugs like fentanyl and victims of human trafficking. Texas families are hurting just like other families across this great land. Crime is rising, inflation is still out of control, and children are being exploited right before our eyes.

The day after the November election, pundits called the GOP weak. Two months later, they called us crazy for working to restore the House to the way it operated for over 200 years. We worked until we achieved the rules that govern a Congress that now operates efficiently. I believe that, standing shoulder to shoulder with Speaker MCCARTHY, this Congress with these rules will help lead America back to its place as a beacon to the free world.

The GOP has not yet gained the trust of many Americans. My belief is that if we hold the line on spending, commit to defending our borders, and resolve to embrace the values of our forefathers, then we will earn America's broad support.

We—all of us right here in this Chamber—wrestled over the rules a few weeks ago. We wrestled hard—just as JIM JORDAN wrestled back in his day—and I am proud to say that this Congress is off to a pretty good start with bold leaders who are making a difference.

The days ahead are days of promise. They will be long days with hard decisions and tough votes, but if we endeavor to embrace the encouraging words of Jesus to sacrifice for our friends, then I believe that we will continue to be that shining example to the world.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that the struggle over ideals in this Chamber is appropriate, and it makes us stronger.

The question is: Will we hold the line, especially when attacked by those who oppose liberty?

The preamble of our Constitution speaks of securing the "Blessings of Liberty." Let's commit to holding the line and to standing together to those opposing American exceptionalism. Let our example to the American people and the world be our commitment to preserving liberty.

Will we sacrifice?

Will we lay down our lives for liberty?

I pray we will.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

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

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, Black history is American history. As Black History Month begins, all across the country we see radical, rightwing elected officials attempting to whitewash American history and ban Black history from being taught in our classrooms.

This is, Mr. Speaker, unmasked white supremacy at its core. You cannot teach the truth about American history without Black history.

This should be alarming to many of us in this Chamber, especially as we fight for a more inclusive multiracial democracy.

I am reminded of the need for Congress to pass critical legislation like Congressman BOWMAN's African American History Act.

It is now more important than ever and very timely that, again, we make sure that we teach our history accurately. The truth must always be taught and should inspire all of us to continue to march for freedom, equity, and justice for all in the spirit of our civil rights leaders and our social justice seekers who came before us.

We cannot, Mr. Speaker, rob our children of learning the role of systemic racism in our American history and how it continues to impact the lives of many of our neighbors across the country.

This is how we support our communities to gain unity, to embrace diversity. It is critical that we tell the truth about our Nation's past, and that includes reckoning with our history of racism, enslavement, segregation, and redlining in our communities, and even now with the Black Lives Matter movement in our country.

This painting, Mr. Speaker, is called Critical Race Theory by Jonathan Harris, a local artist in Detroit. It is a powerful reminder of the importance of teaching and preserving Black history. We cannot allow anyone to erase Black history and the powerful legacies of our civil rights warriors, many of which inspire me today.

We cannot learn from our past if our past is no longer being taught in our education system.

CONGRESS-BUNDESTAG YOUTH EXCHANGE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 40th anniversary of the CBYX program.

This unique program has had more than 26,000 American and German participants contributing to the cultural and political exchange among the citizens of our countries, tying us ever closer together.

As co-chair of the German-American Caucus, my office is proud to host Pau Drexler. He is 23 years old and hails from the southwestern part of Germany.

On August 9 of last year, Pau and 74 other young professionals from Germany landed in Washington, D.C., to start an exchange year as part of the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange. As the word "exchange" implies, 75 young Americans landed during that same time in Frankfurt, Germany.

As part of the program, participants aged between 18 and 25 are placed from Alaska to Texas and New York City to

Los Angeles. This diversity is reflected in the great variety of jobs that they are trained in. Whether bakers, mechanics, or tailors, the CBYX program is an ideal occasion to exchange knowledge, skills, and experience on a professional level, but there are personal connections that emerge from the participants' immersion into daily life of their host communities, as well.

Many of Pau's fellows have already formed great bonds with their host families and classmates. Consequently, Clara, a participant of the 35th CBYX cohort who also interned on the Hill, visited her initial and Pau's current host family last weekend in D.C.

The CBYX program is jointly funded by the U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag. It is an extraordinary chance for young minds to learn about different perspectives and create a better understanding of these in their host and their home communities.

Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the German-American Caucus, I want to emphasize the importance of this program as it strengthens the bonds between our countries not only on a governmental but also on a civic level.

The CBYX is an unprecedented exchange program and a great example of how cultural and political exchange amongst citizens can positively impact international relations in a different, more grassroots, and hands-on way.

MOUNT JEWETT TO KINZUA BRIDGE TRAIL CLUB

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Mount Jewett to Kinzua Bridge Trail Club for winning Pennsylvania Trail of the Year.

This section of the Knox and Kane Rail Trail in McKean County is a 7.8-mile-long trail. The former rail line now provides a level trail for walking, jogging, biking, and horseback riding. In winter months cross-country skiing and snowmobiling are also popular.

The Knox and Kane Rail Trail spans four counties in Northern Pennsylvania and is a source of outdoor fun for the whole family, whether you are local or, quite frankly, a visitor passing through.

The Pennsylvania Trail of the Year Award is given by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to help build enthusiasm and support for trails across the State and to raise public awareness about the value of Pennsylvania's land and water trail network.

Mr. Speaker, Pennsylvania continues its tradition of being a leader in trail development by providing its citizens and visitors with more than 12,000 miles of trails.

Congratulations to the Mount Jewett to Kinzua Bridge Trail Club for this tremendous accomplishment.

□ 1030

REMEMBERING PARKLAND TRAGEDY

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

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind this body of the 5-year anniversary of the shooting at my high school, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, in my hometown of Parkland on February 14, and the 17 lives we lost that day.

I remember that day like it was yesterday. My wife called. I was on the floor of the Florida legislature, and she told me that she had just passed the high school, and she had never seen that many police officers in her life.

We would soon find out that 17 people didn't make it out of the building, most of them children. I went home. I went to the school. I saw what it looks like when a mass shooting comes to your neighborhood, to your high school.

I went to the hotel where they were keeping the families of the children that were missing. I knew they weren't missing. Eight hours those families were in a hotel ballroom waiting to hear from the local police department and the FBI what floor their kid died on in the building.

I didn't hear crying. I heard screaming. It haunts me.

I brought my colleagues to the school from the Florida legislature, Republicans and Democrats. They got to see what it looks like when backpacks are piled up outside, when bullet holes are trying to go through classroom glass, what it looks like when homework is scattered in the hallway and where there is blood outside the front door where someone passed away.

These parents now have empty rooms in their homes, empty chairs at the dinner table. There is no graduation. There is no college. There is no wedding. There is no tomorrow, no future.

My 4-year-old went to school right around the corner from Marjory Stoneman Douglas, one traffic light away. He was in a writing class that day because he needed to learn how to write his name. The teacher that put him into a closet when they went into a lockdown procedure during the shooting was Jen Guttenberg, Fred Guttenberg's wife. She was protecting my son when her daughter Jaime was killed at Douglas.

Five years later, my 4-year-old is now 9, but Jaime and the other kids are forever the age they were. She is forever 14.

On February 14 of this year, the 5-year anniversary of the shooting at Parkland, parents will do what they have been doing for the last 5 years, visiting their children at a cemetery.

I remember the parents telling me that the only thing they did wrong that day was send their kid to school. That is not a statement. It is an indictment on us. Government failed those families that day.

We did respond. We did pass the Marjory Stoneman Douglas School Safety Act. We did raise the age in Florida to buy any gun to 21. We did institute red flag laws that have been used 9,000 times since we put them there. We did place more school resource officers and