

The resolution is full of misinformation, baseless and dangerous claims, and political rhetoric that overwhelms its intended purpose and has no place in what should be an opportunity to bring Congress together in solemn reflection.

My Republican colleagues have consistently tried to blame the rise in violent crime on Democrats and locally-elected District Attorneys and with this resolution have attempted once again to label Democrats as the party of “defund the police.”

The resolution asserts without evidence that calls to defund the police are tied to an increase in violence against law enforcement officers and further implies that locally adopted progressive criminal justice reform policies have contributed to the “negative environment” in which law enforcement officers work.

The Resolution fails to acknowledge that the number of officers killed in the line of duty decreased substantially each year from 586 in 2021 to 137 in 2023.

The resolution advances baseless political attacks against policies aimed at addressing decades of mass incarceration and over-criminalization, attempting to link policies such as decreased criminal penalties and no-cash bail systems with an increase in aggression and violence toward law enforcement.

The Resolution claims that House members are responsible for exemplifying a respect for the rule of law and for law enforcement but overlooks hypocritical anti-police Republican actions:

The failure of Republicans to unanimously vote to award the Congressional Gold Medal to all police officers who responded to the violent January 6th attack on the Capitol and efforts like H. Con. Res. 106 to marginalize federal law enforcement officers.

Republican efforts to defund law enforcement, whether by opposing grant funding that supports state and local agencies, or by calling to abolish federal agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF).

For these reasons I must oppose this fatally flawed resolution—and yet another missed opportunity to support and honor law enforcement personnel across the country and those who lost their lives in the line of duty, without engaging in partisanship on this solemn occasion.

REMEMBERING GAYLE OWEN  
AVERYT

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 21, 2024*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, South Carolina is recognizing the extraordinary achievements of Gayle Averyt, who is a Southern Gentleman who has been a top business and political leader. My personal appreciation is for his courage as one of the state’s earliest Republicans, building the modern Party from non-existence to now super majorities with all statewide elected officials Republicans.

DUNBAR FUNERAL HOME OBITUARY

Gayle Owen Averyt of Columbia, South Carolina, was born on October 13, 1933, in

Montgomery, Alabama, and he died peacefully at his home in Columbia, South Carolina on May 13, 2024. He was the second of three children of Edwin Franklin and Asenath Murfee Averyt. Gayle’s family moved into their first home in Columbia when he was five weeks old.

Gayle graduated from Dreher High School in 1951. He went on to graduate Cum Laude from Davidson College in 1955 and was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa Society. He then earned an MBA from Harvard Business School in 1958.

Gayle’s father, Edwin, co-founded Colonial Life & Accident Insurance Company in 1937. Gayle joined Colonial Life after Harvard, moving through the management ranks. In 1970, he became the Chairman of the Board and CEO after his father retired. He held those positions until 1993 when Colonial Life merged with UNUM Corporation. Gayle became Chairman Emeritus of Colonial Life and served on UNUM’s board from 1993 until 1999.

Gayle and his wife of 61 years, Margaret “Peg” Finlay met on a blind date. This was their first time meeting despite both growing up in Columbia. Safe to say their date was a success and they were married on June 15, 1963, at Kanuga Episcopal Conference Center in Hendersonville, North Carolina.

Gayle was generous with his time, talents and resources. Being of service gave him priceless memories and enhanced his worldview and purpose. He was on many boards and committees, including the Central Carolina Community Foundation, the South Carolina State Fair Association, the South Carolina Orchestra Association, the South Carolina Ports Authority and the Cultural Council of Richland and Lexington Counties. He was an active member of Trinity Cathedral and served on the Finance Committee and in various other capacities. As a board member, he spent countless hours helping Heathwood Hall Episcopal School and Kanuga Conference Center, two places that were very special to him. Even after he retired, Gayle remained involved in numerous business, civic, political, educational and cultural organizations.

Some of the awards Gayle received were the Distinguished Alumni Award from Davidson College, Humanitarian of the Year from The United Way of the Midlands, Business Man of the Year from the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, Honorary Doctor of Public Service from the University of South Carolina, and the Order of the Palmetto from Governor Carroll Campbell. He was inducted into the South Carolina Business Hall of Fame by Junior Achievement.

Gayle led with humility and in the spirit of collaboration. He was quick to acknowledge that he would not have achieved his accomplishments without the support of Peg, his administrative assistants, the many people who were serving alongside him, and his colleagues and employees at Colonial Life. He said that Colonial Life gave more to him than he ever gave to the company.

Gayle exercised regularly and was a fore-runner in promoting healthy living. He established a wellness center at Colonial Life in the 1980s, offering exercise classes in which he often participated. He and Peg played mixed doubles in tennis and began jogging in the 1970s when it was a new fad. He took up golf in high school and shot a hole in one when he was 83. Gayle loved to dance at any occasion where music was playing. He hung upside down in gravity boots and practiced yoga. He was interviewed in an article about longevity in Smart Money magazine, accompanied by a photo of him standing on his head.

Gayle was a kind and caring husband, father and grandfather. He will be remembered

for his integrity, compassionate heart and the many contributions he made towards helping others.

Gayle is survived by his wife, Margaret Finlay Averyt; his daughters, Caroline Averyt Lord and Margaret McQueen Averyt; his sisters, Ella Averyt DuBose and Dorothy Averyt Poston; his grandchildren, William Leighton Lord IV, Owen Elliott Lord and Isabelle Finlay Lord; and his six nephews and nieces. He was predeceased by his parents and his youngest daughter, Elinor Finlay Averyt. A nephew is State Representative Kirkman Finlay.

The memorial service for Gayle will be held on May 23, 2024 at 11:00 AM at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 1100 Sumter Street, Columbia, SC 29201. A reception will follow the service in Satterlee Hall. Dunbar Funeral Home, Devine Street Chapel, is assisting the family.

In lieu of flowers, you may consider making a donation to Trinity Episcopal Cathedral ([www.trinitysc.org](http://www.trinitysc.org)), Kanuga Conference Center ([www.kanuga.org](http://www.kanuga.org)), or the charity of your choice.

Memories of Gayle may be shared at [www.dunbarfunerals.com](http://www.dunbarfunerals.com).

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION  
ACT OF 2024

SPEECH OF

**HON. ROBERT C. “BOBBY” SCOTT**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 14, 2024*

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the brave and selfless members of our nation’s Coast Guard. I also rise to urge my colleagues to join me in working to develop America’s maritime and shipbuilding workforce to meet the growing demand of the offshore wind industry.

I am concerned that the Coast Guard Reauthorization Act, which is a critical piece of legislation, includes language that would be detrimental to the budding domestic offshore wind industry. If enacted without changes, this bill would significantly slow our transition to clean, renewable, and domestic energy. We have seen this worrisome provision before. Numerous stakeholders, then and now, have expressed concern that crewing requirements on globally rare vessels that are already in high demand would make it all but impossible for offshore wind projects to move forward in the near term.

While I certainly share the goal of expanding opportunities for American mariners in offshore wind farm construction, this jeopardizes jobs in offshore wind manufacturing as well as jobs that will last decades in offshore wind turbine operations and maintenance. While I plan to vote for this legislation due to the important work of our nation’s Coast Guard, I urge my colleagues to work together and remove this shortsighted provision.

Last spring, in the interest of finding a path to empower American workers without threatening progress in the near term, I introduced the Offshore Wind American Manufacturing Act. This Act requires the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct a study to inform public and private investment in shipbuilding and workforce training to support the Biden Administration’s goal of deploying 30 gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030. The study would also identify ways that current policies could be strengthened to support

American workers, including new opportunities for American mariners interested in installing offshore wind on the outer continental shelf.

This study is a pragmatic approach that balances our responsibility to reduce emissions

and support American workers and mariners. Thanks to momentum generated by the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, offshore wind has the potential to catalyze major investments in American manufacturing and

shipbuilding. By studying opportunities to maximize the role of American mariners and shipbuilders in meeting these goals, we ensure that we do not allow the perfect to become the enemy of the good.