

That is why I stand here today to demand that Hamas release Alex immediately, along with all the remaining hostages.

Let's be clear. Kidnapping innocent civilians like Alex is not a form of resistance. It is a cowardly, shameful act of terrorism. Likewise, October 7 was not an act of resistance but a brutal, barbaric, and calculated attack against the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

Hamas is not a resistance movement; it is a terrorist group whose mission is the destruction of Israel and the death of every single Jewish person.

If Hamas and its leaders truly cared about its people as they claim, they wouldn't continually disregard humanitarian law and the rules of war, including intentionally targeting civilians, taking hostages, using human shields, and embedding their fighters in civilian communities with utter disregard for their safety and welfare.

The United States of America remains resolute in its position. Terrorism can never be justified. Violence against civilians, particularly children and the elderly, is never acceptable.

We must dismantle Hamas and free the Israeli citizens wrongfully held hostage. Israel has proven its willingness to pause the fighting for hostages to be returned to their loved ones.

Hamas broke the first hostage deal, just as it broke the cease-fire that was in place before October 7. Unfortunately, a cease-fire today would leave Hamas with control of the Gaza Strip and allow the terrorist organization to re-arm and continue its attack against innocent civilians, including innocent children and the elderly.

I call on Qatar and other nations with ties to Hamas to increase the pressure on the terrorist group to free all Israeli hostages immediately. I stand with Alex and his family, friends, and loved ones, and I pray for his safe return.

It is time to bring Alex home. It is time to bring all of the hostages home.

#### HONORING THE TRUNG SISTERS' LEGACY

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

Mrs. STEEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of two Vietnamese legends. Nearly everyone is familiar with the story of Joan of Arc, but not as many Americans are familiar with the story of the Trung sisters.

Trung Trac and Trung Nhi were born under the Han dynasty in what is modern Vietnam. These sisters were very dedicated to education. They were committed to bringing honor to their family, and they were champions of their people. They are best known for their military exceptionalism.

With their help, the Vietnamese people threw off the Han occupation. Today, they are national heroines.

They represent the dignity of the Vietnamese people and the fierce spirit of

independence that resides in their hearts and in the hearts of all Americans.

On March 3, the Vietnamese community in Orange County will honor these two brave sisters.

Today, I am grateful to be able to enter their names into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so Americans may remember their courage and learn from their example.

#### HAMAS HOSTAGE NOA ARGAMANI

Mrs. STEEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share the story of 26-year-old Noa Argamani.

Like many 26-year-olds, Noa loves to dance, she loves music, and she loves her family.

That family includes her mother, Liora, who has stage 4 brain cancer. Liora's one wish is to be with her daughter in her final days, but she is running out of time. That is because on October 7, Noa was one of more than 240 men, women, children, and elderly kidnapped by Hamas. The barbaric behavior of Hamas has caused devastation for real people like Noa and Liora.

I implore all of my colleagues and my fellow Americans to remember them. We must have absolute moral clarity, and we must have resolve.

Hamas must be eliminated. The hostages must be returned. We must stand with the families and victims of this attack, and we must stand with Israel. We owe it to Noa, to Liora, to our ally, Israel, and to the American people.

#### WISHING LAURA PARK HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Mrs. STEEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish a very happy birthday to a great South Californian and friend, Laura Park. Laura is a brilliant designer and the owner of LeeHwa Wedding and Hanbok.

For over 30 years, she has used her business to bring the traditional Korean hanbok to Americans. Her work is the product of four generations of hanbok makers, going all the way back to her great-grandparents in North Korea.

Now she represents what it looks like when Koreans achieve the American Dream, as her business has become the largest hanbok house in the United States.

As a first-generation Korean American myself, I am so appreciative of her work to preserve the traditions of Korea, while embracing the greatness of America at the same time. Her exceptional work is something all Californians and all Americans can be proud of.

Laura, thank you for all you do, and have a very happy birthday.

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#### HONORING "PAT" DEON, SR., ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM SEPTA

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

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor someone who has made

a huge difference for Philadelphia and southeast Pennsylvania, Pat Deon, Sr. He recently retired after 29 years serving on the board of our transit agency, SEPTA, including 25 years as chairman of the board.

While Pat and I are from different political parties, we have always worked together to get things done. We could use much more of this around here.

When Pat was appointed to the SEPTA board in 1995, the agency was in a very different shape. It had a reputation for waste and was facing a \$75 million deficit. He has brought the eyes of a businessperson to SEPTA, and he was instrumental in achieving legislative successes in Harrisburg. I know that because I was a legislative leader there during most of his time as chair.

The Philadelphia region is the largest economic engine in Pennsylvania, and SEPTA is vital for making it work. Even the people who don't ride SEPTA benefit from less traffic on the roads and from the air being cleaner.

Pat has led SEPTA through several difficult periods, including the Great Recession and the great pandemic. I want to thank him for all that he has done and for the leadership that he has provided and the fact that he realized that we must do things together. We honored him in the city of Philadelphia for his work and the dedication. He is truly an asset that we will really value.

I thank Pat for all that he has done.

#### ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT AGAINST SECRETARY ALEJANDRO MAYORKAS

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

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, this morning the House Committee on Homeland Security passed two Articles of Impeachment accusing Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas of high crimes and misdemeanors.

I have thought, and with the information developed by the committee, have come to believe that Secretary Mayorkas should be impeached for his clear violation of the law, and when this matter comes to the floor, I intend to vote in favor of his impeachment.

That said, today I wish to remark upon the importance and merit, when it comes to most things, and certainly impeachment, of the value of carefully following proper process.

Impeachment is a constitutional function of the highest order, and when considering its use, we must transcend passions and politics. If impeachment is to remain what the Founders intended, and that is something greater than a political tool deployed whenever the mood suits, then it must be used as originally designed: as a means of holding people who have political power accountable when they violate the high crimes and misdemeanors standard.

If we fail to follow best practices in this effort, then impeachment will soon

become little more than a sad and ineffective means of expressing dissatisfaction with the policies of the opposing party.

It has correctly been said that the object of the House in an impeachment proceeding is to create a full record upon which a verdict in the Senate can be fairly and efficiently adjudged.

Thanks to Chairman MARK GREEN's excellent work, this is exactly what has happened. Over the past 10 months, including important recent evidentiary hearings, Chairman MARK GREEN's Homeland Security Committee, using an open and deliberative process, has carefully created a full record reflecting Secretary Mayorkas' violation of statutory and constitutional standards upon which the Senate can and should deliberate.

That process has not only developed the facts and evidence of breaches of our laws, it has also allowed full debate and full disclosure to our Nation of what our law requires and the Secretary's intentional circumvention of those laws.

Had we not completed this investigative process, we would have not only weakened the impeachment remedy, but we would have also made it much easier for the Senate to ignore the excellent work the committee has now done.

Just a few words about Article I of the Homeland Security Committee's impeachment resolution:

United States Code 8 U.S.C. 1226(c) explicitly states that illegal aliens who have a criminal conviction shall be detained. Yet Secretary Mayorkas literally ordered DHS employees to not enforce this law. This is not mere neglect, nor can this violation be excused as a result of not having space available in the detention facilities. There were and are spaces available, and if there were not, the Secretary could and should have asked for increased funding in the DHS budget.

In fact, when Secretary Mayorkas appeared before the Judiciary Committee, on which I sit, I asked why he had not requested more money for his department's budget instead of less.

Because we Republicans followed regular order and completed the hearing process, we have met and exceeded the threshold of evidence necessary to justify a trial. The record established by Chairman MARK GREEN's Homeland Security Committee contains adequate evidence of the Secretary's breach of our laws, and this constitutes more than an adequate foundation for his impeachment.

Thus, when the Senate receives this impeachment resolution, it will have the evidence needed to render a fair and efficient verdict, and that verdict should be that the Secretary is guilty of breaking our Nation's laws and should be convicted and removed from office.

## LESS GUN VIOLENCE IN CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA

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

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, last week law enforcement officials in Chester, Pennsylvania, announced that this community has seen a 72 percent decrease in shootings with victims since 2019.

2023 saw the fewest gun homicides in two decades and a 68 percent decrease in gun homicides since 2019.

Chester was once ranked among the most dangerous cities in the Nation for gun violence.

So how did this happen?

Since 2019, law enforcement, community members, faith groups, and local government have all been working together as the Chester Partnership for Safe Neighborhoods.

During a period when we saw gun violence spike across the Nation, we have seen year-over-year reductions in gun violence and other violent crimes as community partners have worked together to implement a community-based violence prevention program with support from State and Federal funding, including the American Rescue Plan and the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.

It is time to recognize the success of these pivotal programs with more than a pat on the back. Rather than offering sound bites and saber-rattling, the Chester community, a democratically led community I might add, rolled up its sleeves and did the work of identifying the resources and community partnerships needed to reduce gun violence and create a safer community.

I want to congratulate DA Stollsteimer, Police Chief Gretskey, Cory Long from Making a Change Group, and all of the community members who have been so important in this effort.

To those who say that there is nothing we can do about gun violence, I say: Shame on you.

Programs like this work, and we need to recognize and support them.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ANITA SANTOS SINGH

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Anita Santos Singh, a champion for access to justice.

At the age of 32, Anita became the founding executive director of Philadelphia Legal Assistance Center, the federally funded legal services program serving Philadelphia.

It is never easy to head up a program that provides legal services to the poor.

While legal aid is supposed to assure access to justice for low-income Americans, these programs are chronically underfunded and have been so since their inception. We spend more on Halloween costumes for our pets in this country than we do for legal services for the poor. It is no surprise that study after study shows that 80 percent

of low-income Americans cannot afford or access legal help for civil problems like eviction, child custody, or gaining access to their veterans' benefits.

Nonetheless, Anita faced additional challenges of leading a brand new program which had been formed in response to the drastic service and funding cutbacks imposed by Congress in the 1990s, and she did so in the poorest large city in the country, with a shoestring budget and a couple dozen attorneys to serve thousands of clients.

I headed up the search committee that hired Anita, and we knew she was up to the job. Under her leadership, Philadelphia Legal Assistance grew into a frontline organization that now helps over 6,000 clients a year fight systems of injustice and disparity.

Anita's colleagues describe her as a tireless advocate for access to justice who dedicated her life to helping Philadelphia's most vulnerable populations meet critical needs.

Anita constantly developed innovative projects to meet the ever-changing needs of Philadelphia's poorest citizens. She created the first low-income tax clinic in Philadelphia. She expanded legal services for migrant farm workers, including addressing issues of domestic abuse. She leveraged Federal funding sources to expand family law services which is one of the highest legal needs in Philadelphia. She created the Medical Legal Community Partnership which brings community-based legal assistance to low-income patients at 17 different sites.

During the 2008 recession, she developed programs to assist families in danger of losing their homes. In 2021 she helped develop an eviction diversion program for tenants which became part of a national model.

Until her premature death last month, Anita Santos Singh was a legal services champion and advocate for access to justice in Philadelphia for 34 years.

Because of her work, thousands of Philadelphians were able to stay in their homes, put food on the table, and live a life free of partner violence. Her legacy will live on through the thousands of lives she has touched through her efforts.

Her story is a reminder that access to legal aid remains a continuous challenge in this country. For many, a single legal problem can spiral into a mountain of debt, homelessness, or unemployment. Many Americans facing legal challenges are not aware of their rights or options which can lead to stress and confusion and can often exacerbate the legal challenges they face.

We have an obligation to ensure that all Americans are aware of their legal options, and, more importantly, that they have access to representation under the law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to honor Anita's work by ensuring that every American has access to quality legal assistance whenever they need it.