

people, many of whom have no native ancestry, I fear that necessary appropriations cannot feasibly keep pace.

That is the crux of the issue. If there was an actual merit-based system behind the Lumbee case for Federal recognition, they would go through the OFA process as set out in the current law.

As they know, it won't hold up under a deliberative process. They have instead sought to seek special treatment through other avenues, all in the face of credible opposition by multiple federally recognized Tribes.

More than 140 established Tribes from across the country have said that the Lumbee and other groups should go through the Federal recognition process at the Department of the Interior to demonstrate the merits of their claim to be a Tribe. I agree.

I urge all my colleagues to take these concerns into account, and I hope that the merit-based process put in place by Congress decades ago on Federal Tribal recognition will be adhered to.

Mr. Speaker, while I have the floor, I would also like to urge you and my colleagues to move H.R. 7227, the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act, to create a commission to get a better understanding of the grievous wrongs done to Native American children in federally run boarding schools.

Our Tribal nations deserve the dignity to understand what happened to their family members at these schools. It is the very least this country can do.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The chair would remind Members that the rules do not allow references to persons in the gallery.

□ 1045

#### HONORING BLACK ARTISTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the lives of Frankie Beverly, James Earl Jones, and Tito Jackson, three remarkable individuals who have left an undeniable mark on the arts and Black community.

Frankie Beverly, the smooth-voiced, gospel choir boy turned Maze front man, was a cornerstone of R&B and soul music for over five decades. Timeless hits like "Before I Let Go" have become anthems in the Black community, serving as the soundtrack to countless celebrations, romances, and moments of reflection.

Beverly's music, characterized by his blend of funk, soul, and gospel influences, speaks to the heart of the Black experience. His unwavering commitment to his craft and his refusal to compromise his artistic vision have earned him the respect of peers and fans alike, paving the way for Black artists to thrive after him.

His impact extends beyond music. He has been a voice for unity and pride within the Black community, using his platform to promote positivity. I was proud to honor him when he performed in Los Angeles on his farewell tour just a few months ago.

Frankie Beverly was a musical storyteller, poet, and icon. I am grateful he lived authentically and encouraged us to do the same.

James Earl Jones, a titan of stage and screen, captivated audiences worldwide for decades with his commanding presence and iconic voice. From his groundbreaking role as the first African-American President in "The Man" to his unforgettable voice performances as Darth Vader and Mufasa, Jones regularly broke barriers and inspired generations of aspiring performers.

From Broadway to the silver screen, Jones' range shined bright, so much so that he was one of 27 people to ever achieve an EGOT designation.

Beyond his artistic achievements, Jones was a vocal advocate for civil rights and a role model for aspiring Black actors. He proved that with talent and perseverance, you can reach the pinnacle of success in the entertainment industry.

James Earl Jones will forever be remembered for his powerful, majestic voice that carries nostalgia across generational barriers.

As a founding member of the legendary Jackson 5, Tito Jackson was a pivotal figure in shaping the landscape of popular music. Alongside his brothers, Tito helped break down racial barriers in the entertainment industry during the 1970s. His distinctive guitar playing contributed to the group's unique sound, influencing countless musicians across genres.

Later, Tito established himself as a solo artist, continuing to create music that touched fans worldwide.

His dedication to preserving the Jackson family's musical legacy while supporting various charities demonstrated his commitment to both artistry and the Black community.

We shall honor his legacy by continuing to support Black artistry and encouraging youth in Black communities to pursue their musical dreams.

These three men—Frankie Beverly, James Earl Jones, and Tito Jackson—have not only entertained us but have also served as beacons of excellence, perseverance, and cultural pride. Their contributions to the Black community and to the arts are immeasurable, and their legacies will continue to inspire future generations.

Please join me in honoring them today for their talent, dedication, and enduring impact on American culture.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF SIKA DWIMFO

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Sika Dwimfo, a prolific artist, jeweler, and businessowner, who was an integral part of the fabric of our Los Angeles community. He was widely known as

Sika and also the godfather of Leimert Park.

The son of a tailor, Sika developed a love for art and a strong sense of personal style that he would carry with him for the rest of his life.

In 1971, he moved from Chicago to L.A. in search of warmer weather and a place to complement his free-spirited energy. He set down his roots in my district, and in 1992 established Sika Gallery on Degnan Boulevard. The shop, which I was honored to visit in February, sells African jewelry, art, and clothing. Over the years, it has become a beloved and integral part of the historic Leimert Park neighborhood. His daughter, Milan, helps run the gallery today.

Though Sika is no longer with us, his legacy lives on, not only through his business, but through Sika Dwimfo Corridor, a street that was named in his honor in June.

Please join me in honoring Sika's memory. His authenticity, creativity, and gentle spirit made Los Angeles a better place.

#### CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF FRANCISCO YBANEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. DE LA CRUZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. DE LA CRUZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true American hero from my home State of Texas, Mr. Francisco Ybanez.

Born on September 28, 1922, near George West, Mr. Ybanez has lived a life of dedicated service to our Nation. Before World War II, he joined the Civilian Conservation Corps, but when his country called upon him to serve in the military, he answered with courage and commitment.

Enlisting in 1942 at Fort Sam Houston, Mr. Ybanez became a marksman, rifleman, and a AAA auto weapons crewman for the 601st. He fought bravely in the Pacific, serving in the Philippines and Okinawa, earning numerous honors, including the Asiatic Pacific Medal with two Bronze Stars, the Philippine Liberation Ribbon with two Bronze Stars, and the World War II Victory Medal.

Today, at almost 102 years old, Mr. Ybanez resides in Alice, Texas, surrounded by generations of his beautiful family. His legacy of service and sacrifice is an inspiration to all Americans. I ask my colleagues today to join me in celebrating his extraordinary life. I wish Mr. Ybanez a happy birthday.

#### CONGRATULATING CHIEF ROMAN FLORES

Ms. DE LA CRUZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate and recognize Chief Roman Candelario Flores as the new fire chief of Alamo, Texas. Chief Flores brings over two decades of invaluable experience in firefighting and emergency response to his new role, making him a tremendous asset to the city of Alamo and its residents.

With an associate's degree in fire services administration and certifications such as master firefighter and fire inspector, Chief Flores is a true leader in public safety.

Mayor J.R. Garza and the people of Alamo have rightly expressed their excitement for his leadership, and I share in their excitement. Chief Flores' dedication extends beyond his firefighting duties. He is deeply involved in youth programs, church groups, and local economic development. His commitment to serving others exemplifies the values we hold dear in south Texas.

I congratulate Chief Flores on his well-deserved appointment, and I look forward to working with him and seeing the positive impact he will make in Alamo, Texas. I congratulate Chief Flores.

#### HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. DE LA CRUZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, a time to honor the profound contributions of Hispanic Americans to the fabric of our Nation. From the fields of agriculture to the Halls of Congress, Hispanic men and women have shaped America's story with hard work, faith, and a deep love of this country.

Our vibrant culture, rooted in strong family values and perseverance, continues to inspire new generations. As the first Hispanic from my community to serve in Congress, I am proud to be part of this legacy, a legacy that reminds us of the power of "the American Dream," "el sueño Americano" for all.

This month, let us not only reflect on our history, but also recommit ourselves to policies that uplift Hispanic families and every American. Together, we can build a bright future that honors our heritage and strengthens our Nation.

#### ACCESSING BASIC NECESSITIES

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

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, access to utilities is often a matter of life and death. Without access to electricity or water, people may find themselves unable to keep their families healthy, their homes heated or cooled during extreme weather, or unable to sustain critical medical equipment in their home.

Utilities are not just a convenience, Mr. Speaker, but a fundamental human right that should be affordable and accessible to all. That is why Congresswoman CORI BUSH, Congressman JAMAAL BOWMAN, and I introduced a resolution recognizing the human rights to utilities, to affirm that access to water, sanitation, electricity, heating, cooling, public transit, and broadband are basic human rights. Utility access is especially critical for rural and low-income communities, like many in my congressional district, where many, again, are struggling to

make ends meet and are on the front lines of the climate crisis.

The greedy corporations that own and operate utilities could choose to help families, but instead they are forcing them through the dehumanizing process of having their power cut off and their water shut down. Instead, companies like DTE in my community prioritize stockholder returns and CEO pay, trapping many of our neighbors in a cycle of poverty while they continue to make enormous profits.

Mr. Speaker, in the richest country on Earth, no family should be denied access to utilities, lack access to clean water, face energy burdens, and bear the brunt of corporate pollution. Access to these basic necessities is and should be a fundamental human right in our country.

#### CONDEMNING RACISM AND BIGOTRY TOWARD HAITIAN PEOPLE

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, our Haitian neighbors from Detroit to Springfield, Ohio, are being targeted with hate, threatened with violence, and smeared with dehumanizing lies.

MAGA extremists, including the twice-impeached former President, are spreading disgusting lies about our Haitian neighbors. This is nothing more than xenophobia and anti-Black racism.

Our Haitian neighbors have been victimized by centuries of colonization, foreign exploitation, and repeated occupation and oppression by foreign powers, most notably by the United States. Haitian immigrant families in Springfield do not deserve to be targeted with a wave of bomb threats.

We must stop the dehumanization of our immigrant neighbors coming from both sides. We should welcome asylum seekers, not push legislation that funds separation of families and criminalization. We always, always must stand with our immigrant neighbors who are seeking a better life for their families.

I am so proud to have joined colleagues in the Haiti Caucus in introducing H. Res. 1473 condemning the racism and bigotry toward our Haitian neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, I say to our Haitian neighbors in Springfield and across our country: We love you. We see you. We stand with you, and we will always have your back.

#### SAFE STORAGE SAVES LIVES

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, my residents continue to share with me their fears of getting that dreaded phone call from their kids at school, that there is an active shooter, that there is a high-alert alarm now.

Just in the first month of the school year in my district, Southfield police arrested a 15-year-old boy for carrying a handgun in his high school. We are grateful for Michigan's OK2Say program that gave that student the ability to share that vital information that saved lives.

Gun violence is everywhere, Mr. Speaker. It is not just in our schools. After a Lions' game last week, gun vio-

lence took two innocent lives in the Eastern Market. We saw it, literally, at a children's splash pad in Michigan. Also, we even saw it at a block club, where many neighbors in the community were celebrating.

We must never get numb to the gun violence impacting our families, Mr. Speaker. The majority of our communities want more action on gun violence. That is why I am really proud to have worked with so many folks to introduce the Safe Storage Saves Lives Act, which would require firearm sellers to provide each buyer with a secure gun storage or safety device, a gun lock, for every gun they buy.

Mr. Speaker, in Michigan, the Children's Hospital of Michigan is now passing out gun boxes, literally storage for guns because they know this is now the leading cause of death for our children.

Of course, we have so much more work to do here in this Congress. It pains me that we continue to have inaction after continued over-and-over and high-profile shootings. It cannot become the norm. We must work together. Congress cannot ignore survivors' families forever.

□ 1100

#### CHARLESTON COUNTY SHERIFF

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENTZ). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to let the Charleston County's sanctuary sheriff in South Carolina know that she can run, but she cannot hide.

In recent weeks, I have had sources and a whistleblower come forward about the damaging policies of Charleston County's sanctuary sheriff letting off criminal illegal aliens onto the streets of Charleston County, South Carolina. She can say that the Charleston County jail doesn't reside in my district, but when she lets out an illegal alien who is committing crimes against residents in South Carolina, she doesn't get that excuse.

She can blame the release of illegal aliens on her department policies all she wants, but what she will not tell you is that she literally drafted and signed off on her own department policies for what she is blaming the reason why she has allowed over 50 criminal illegal aliens out onto the streets of South Carolina.

She can call me a liar all she wants, but anyone who knows me knows that in Congress or in a Committee on Oversight and Accountability hearing or any hearing, quite frankly, I bring the receipts, including a receipt from ICE showing she has let off over 50 criminal illegal aliens out onto the streets of South Carolina, most recently as August 23, when she allowed a criminal illegal alien, an alleged pedophile who tried to solicit a minor, back out onto the streets.