

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.

She blamed that release because she said her department policy is that a judge has to keep him detained. I say to sanctuary Sheriff Kristin Graziano that it is her own policies that she wrote and signed her name to that she is blaming it on.

When we are up here in Congress, I demand truth, I demand honesty, and I demand integrity. So, too, do the residents of South Carolina. They deserve to be put first. They deserve to be safe in their homes, safe on the streets, and safe in their communities. Until that changes, Charleston County sanctuary Sheriff Kristin Graziano is to blame for what is happening in South Carolina today and her own county.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to share that if you go out onto sanctuary Sheriff Kristin Graziano's Twitter feed, you will see in her header, she is proudly standing with border czar KAMALA HARRIS. The Biden-Harris administration has allowed our borders wide open for the last 4 years, allowing over 10 million illegals to come into our country illegally. Every town has become a border town. Every county has become a border county. Every State has become a border State, and not on my watch at all, not one more day.

ICE even responded to Charleston County sanctuary Sheriff Kristin Graziano yesterday and commented on how problematic her policies are, freely releasing criminal illegal aliens out onto the streets of South Carolina.

I won't put up with her lies. In fact, this morning, at 10 a.m., she had a press conference for the local press. She spoke for barely 1 minute and refused to take any questions from any member of the press. That is cowardly, that is shameful, and that is disgusting.

She doesn't deserve the privilege of serving as sheriff of Charleston County. Her policies are damaging to our residents, and I will not allow one more day of this behavior on my watch.

CELEBRATING GRAND OPENING OF JOSEPH S.
DANING AMPHITHEATER

Ms. MACE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise my hometown of Goose Creek, South Carolina, which came together to celebrate the grand opening of the Joseph S. Daning Amphitheater.

Named after former South Carolina House Representative Joseph Daning, who worked hard to secure the funding for this nearly \$4 million project, this amphitheater can accommodate around 800 people—plenty of room for families and friends all at once.

I feel truly blessed to represent a district so dedicated to our community, and I certainly enjoyed working with former South Carolina House Representative Joe Daning when we served in the State Legislature together.

We appreciate all of his work and the town of Goose Creek's work to provide this amphitheater for residents of the Lowcountry.

COMMEMORATING POLISH
CADETS' 125TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. KENNEDY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Polish Cadets of Buffalo, New York, an organization dedicated to honoring and preserving Polish heritage and providing a welcoming community for intercultural peace and unity.

Founded in 1899, the Cadets emphasized athletics and physical and military training. Booming in popularity leading up to the First World War, the group, led by Anthony Schreiber, censor of the Polish National Alliance, laid the cornerstone for their clubhouse in September 1913.

A fixture of the Black Rock neighborhood in Buffalo, the community center would host speakers, hold celebrations, and organized fundraisers for Polish relief when the conflict started.

When the war came, 18 members left to fight in Europe. All returned home.

By the end of World War II, the Polish Cadets had over 1,200 members and formed their own credit union. During the postwar era, the Cadets opened their membership to individuals of non-Polish descent, fostering greater inclusivity.

Today, the Polish Cadets preserve their traditions and create new ones. It maintains the Polish library and Harmony Polish Folk Ensemble and hosts Dyngus Day and Oktoberfest.

For 125 years, the focus of the Polish Cadets has been to provide a welcoming space for coexistence, harmony, and community betterment.

I offer my congratulations and gratitude to the Polish Cadets on this significant milestone of preserving the Polish heritage for future generations and honoring those who began this important Buffalo institution.

REMEMBERING MARK MORTENSON

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Mark Mortenson, who passed on September 14 and whose life's work brought beauty and wonder to so many lives in western New York.

After taking on his most recent role as president and CEO of the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens in 2022, Mark was ready to take on a multimillion-dollar expansion to fulfill its mission of delivering wow, wonder, and welcome to our region. In pursuit of doing so, he created an environment where people of all backgrounds felt this sense of welcoming and belonging.

Before coming to Buffalo, his tenure with The Walt Disney Company spanned 20 years, but it was in Buffalo, his home since 2006, where Mark and his family put down roots.

Throughout his career, his warmth, focus, and sense of humor cultivated partnerships and support for our cultural institutions, including as the CEO of Richardson Center Corporation,

the heart of Buffalo's cultural corridor; executive director of the Lipsey Architecture Center in Buffalo; and as president and CEO of the Buffalo Museum of Science and Tiff Nature Preserve.

His loving family is in our prayers, including his husband, Curt Maranto, and children Nicolas, Kiara, Mikey, Elliott, and Emily, and the late Clayton. He will be missed.

May my friend Mark Mortenson rest in peace.

CONDEMNING PROJECT 2025

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn Trump's Project 2025. The American people need to know what is in this extreme MAGA Republican agenda and what it is all about.

It would reject the power of the people. Trump's Project 2025 weaponizes the DOJ and FBI, imposes loyalty tests to purge our civil service, and undermines congressional oversight.

It would take away our rights and freedoms. Trump's Project 2025 goes after free speech, a woman's right to choose, LGBTQ protection, and the progress we have made toward racial equity.

It would hurt middle-class families. Trump's Project 2025 raises taxes on working people, increases the cost of prescription drugs, slashes funding for public schools, reduces benefits for our veterans with disabilities, and jeopardizes Social Security and Medicare that our seniors rely on.

It would be an un-American attack on each of us. Trump's Project 2025 erodes consumer protections, damages our election integrity, and harms our world standing.

This is a blueprint to deny the rights and privileges of many in pursuit of total power of a few.

We must reject Trump's Project 2025. We cannot allow this extreme MAGA Republican agenda to become our reality.

THE CHOICE BEFORE US

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

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge this will be the very last time I speak in this Chamber before the next Presidential election.

In the coming weeks, the American people will head to the polls, and we will have a choice before us. We can choose 4 more years of Vice President HARRIS chaos and madness, or we can choose 4 years of law and order and American strength.

When I came to Congress almost 4 years ago, America was strong, our streets were safe, and our border was more secure than at any time in recent history. Prior to the pandemic, the U.S. had one of the strongest economies we have had in the past 20 years.

Even in the face of adversity, President Trump led the Federal Government in empowering America's small businesses and families.