

With this bill, called the Half-Century Update for Water Access and Affordability Act, we are establishing a bill that would dedicate funding every year to keep people's water flowing. The program, Mr. Speaker, would include direct financial assistance, bill payments, and debt relief. What I also love is that it is going to help with water efficiency upgrades, like plumbing repairs that are much-needed in very old homes all across our Nation.

We are going to set up a community advisory committee made up of residents, nonprofits, utilities, and other local stakeholders that will help advise the EPA on how to set up and implement these programs.

Mr. Speaker, the act will also go to help fund local nonprofits to help with technical assistance to help many of our families. We are also going to collect the data that is necessary to improve this program every year to make the biggest impact.

This bill would also ban the practice of water shutoffs as punishment for not being able to afford your bills. It is inhumane to have our families in the richest country in the world not have access to water.

We always seem to have the money, Mr. Speaker, to send more bombs and weapons, but not support working families who can't live without water.

CELEBRATING UNITED COMMUNITY HOUSING COALITION'S 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I celebrate United Community Housing Coalition's 50 years of service to our communities.

It is an amazing organization that, in the past five decades, worked on life-saving housing assistance for many thousands of our neighbors throughout Detroit and southeastern Michigan. The United Community Housing Coalition has been a critical organization, helping families retain their homes, helping folks become homeowners, and helping to protect neighborhoods from abandonment and blight.

UHC serves as a beacon of hope for many of our residents in building a sense of community and empowerment. Their efforts in one of the most difficult times during the recession helped many Detroiters understand their legal rights, avoid foreclosure, fight eviction, organize, and secure housing.

I am proud of these 50 years of extraordinary service to our families. Please join me, Mr. Speaker, in recognizing UHC's impact as we continue to strive toward a future where everyone has a safe and secure place to call home.

BLINKEN'S 30-DAY HUMANITARIAN DEADLINE

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, let's talk about "Biden's 30-day humanitarian deadline."

The Biden administration has continued to ignore reports from its own experts, international human rights organizations, and the United Nations that the Israeli Government is blocking humanitarian aid into Gaza in violation of U.S. and international law.

ProPublica published a detailed account of how the U.S. State Department submitted report after report to Congress that contradicted the findings of the Department's own experts and those of other agencies.

The Israeli Government is using starvation as a weapon of war. Look at this picture. It is evidence that blocking U.S. humanitarian aid is clearly happening, and it is a blatant violation of section 620(i) of the Foreign Assistance Act.

In a letter to the Israeli Government on October 13, Secretary Blinken acknowledged that the Israeli Government is violating U.S. law by blocking aid and gave them 30 days to comply. The letter demanded that 350 trucks be allowed into Gaza per day. Guess what? According to Israel's own data and own government, only 57 trucks were allowed into Gaza per day in October. If that is even true, this is the lowest amount of aid into Gaza in a year.

On November 1, top United Nations officials said the entire Palestinian population in northern Gaza is at imminent risk of dying from disease, famine, and violence.

This week, Mr. Speaker, Secretary Blinken exposed his lie by announcing that there will be no change to any policy, despite admitting that the Israeli Government has still failed to comply with all of their demands.

Secretary Blinken has continued to lie to Congress and should resign. U.S. law is very clear: No nation blocking U.S. humanitarian assistance can receive U.S. weapons. The Biden-Harris administration cannot pick and choose when they comply with our own laws.

Children are forced to eat pet food and bug-infested flour. Look at this, and do not turn your back on again being complicit to this war crime.

Blinken says there is no need to change our own policy. Shameful.

HONORING FRANCO CUPINI'S 80TH BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 80th birthday of Mr. Franco Cupini.

Born in the heart of Rome, he was determined to make his mark on the world through his culinary talents. He learned the intricacies of Italian cuisine and earned himself a position at Villa Madama, of the Presidential palace, serving President Giovanni Leone and other distinguished government dignitaries.

He moved to the United States in 1968, bringing the flavors of Italy to the Midwest with his brother, Carlo. They owned several restaurants, and he solidified his place as a top-tier chef at the Ritz Carlton in St. Louis.

In 2003, Franco and his son Eddie opened up a restaurant in Kansas City in Westport, Cupini's. We eat there often.

What began as a modest 1,500-square-foot deli quickly became a local treasure. Over the next 21 years, the restaurant grew in size, dedication, and quality. Franco was a repeat guest on our morning show on Fox4 News.

Franco's love for his homeland is a testament to his lifelong dedication and passion. His story is one of hard work, determination, and a love for good food.

I wish Franco Cupini a happy birthday, and I thank him for keeping the culinary spirit of Italy alive and well.

Ciao, bello.

CELEBRATING ERICA SHADWELL

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding educator from Columbia, Missouri, Ms. Erica Shadwell, who participated and was selected as part of the prestigious Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program for the 2023–2024 academic year.

Ms. Shadwell is a dedicated teacher at Ann Hawkins Gentry Middle School and really shared her expertise and passion for education with students in Ghana, fostering cross-cultural understanding and enriching the lives of countless students.

The Fulbright Program is a beacon of international exchange and cooperation, and Ms. Shadwell's selection reflects her exceptional dedication and commitment to education. Her work represents the excellence of Missouri's educators and the importance of building bridges between our communities and the entire world.

We are proud of Ms. Shadwell's achievements and her role as an ambassador of knowledge. Her efforts will inspire students, both in Missouri and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Erica Shadwell on this remarkable achievement and wishing her the very best in this exciting and impactful endeavor.

HONORING CORPORAL GERALD "JERRY" NEWTON WILSON

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember Corporal Gerald "Jerry" Newton Wilson, a true American hero from Macks Creek, Missouri, whose remains, after more than seven decades, have finally returned home.

Corporal Wilson was born on December 18, 1930, and enlisted in the Army in 1948, serving bravely in the Korean war with Fox Company. He was reported missing in action on July 25, 1950, following a fierce ambush by North Korean forces near Yongdong.

For decades, Mr. Speaker, his family endured the heartache of uncertainty with his remains resting unidentified in the U.N. Military Cemetery until the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency confirmed his identity in 2018.

On October 11, 2024, his remains were returned to Camdenton, accompanied by a tribute procession from across our State, an honor for a soldier who gave his life in the line of duty.

Corporal Wilson's sacrifice and unwavering faithfulness to his country

remind us of the true cost of freedom. May he rest in peace as we welcome him home.

HONORING LARRY DOBSON

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Larry Dobson, a remarkable leader and selfless servant in Missouri, for receiving the Lieutenant Governor's Senior Service Award.

Born on July 4, 1948, in Harrisonville, Missouri, Larry's dedication to education and community service shaped countless lives across our great State. From his impactful career as an educator and guidance counselor in the Raymore-Peculiar District and Blue Springs School District to his steadfast commitment to Peculiar United Methodist Church, Larry has embodied the spirit of service.

He has contributed more than 50 years to numerous community boards, including Caring Hearts of Peculiar and the Missouri Bluebird Society, where he has worked tirelessly to enrich his community and uplift others.

Larry's motto is: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," the Golden Rule, a guiding principle that has certainly inspired a lot of us and him over the years.

Today, we celebrate Larry Dobson's legacy and his profound impact on the great State of Missouri.

CREATING A SHADOW CABINET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. NICKEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, last week is done. As Democrats, we simply failed to convince the American people we have better ideas to solve their problems, but we do.

Now, we need to dust ourselves off and get ready to fight. We can't let Donald Trump's extreme MAGA agenda go unanswered or unopposed. Zone defense isn't going to work. We are going to have to go man on man.

Here is an idea on how to organize our opposition. We need to borrow from our British friends and appoint a shadow cabinet to fight back against the worst abuses of a second Trump administration.

The special relationship between the United States and Britain extends not just to our strength on the global stage but also to our shared commitment to democracy. Across the Atlantic, the British have something we don't: a team from the opposition that mirrors the government's own Cabinet members.

They watch the Cabinet closely, publicly challenging, scrutinizing, and offering new ideas. It is another form of checks and balances, a quiet guardrail that holds those in power accountable. With a shadow cabinet, there is no hiding.

Each decision by the government faces a ready counterpoint, not just from the media and voters, but also from political leaders poised to step in.

Shadow cabinet members can also become the clear point people for advocacy and grassroots organizers, making it easier to unify and amplify the solutions that those in power are ignoring.

It is democracy's insurance policy, and it strengthens the government, too. There is no room for lazy ideas when rivals stand ready to step in.

What would a shadow cabinet look like here in the United States? We certainly would make it our own, an American version. We have an amazing wealth of talent on the Democratic side of the aisle in Congress, people loyal to the Constitution and ready to be the watchdogs for an out-of-control Trump administration.

Democratic Leaders HAKEEM JEFFRIES and CHUCK SCHUMER in the Senate could appoint 26 Members of Congress to go one on one with each member of Donald Trump's Cabinet.

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If Trump attempts to weaponize the justice system against his political opponents with Matt Gaetz at the helm, we could see incoming Senator ADAM SCHIFF as our shadow attorney general, arguing against replacing our independent prosecutors with Trump loyalists.

If Trump seeks to eliminate the Department of Education, Congresswoman JAHANA HAYES, a former teacher of the year, could step up as shadow education secretary to loudly defend public education in the United States.

If Trump orders MARCO RUBIO to hand Ukraine and much of Eastern Europe to Vladimir Putin, Congressman GREG MEEKS, as shadow secretary of state, could be a strong voice in support of maintaining international relationships and protecting democracy at home and abroad.

Senator MICHAEL BENNET as shadow treasury secretary and Congresswoman SUZAN DELBENE as shadow commerce secretary could help ensure the middle class and small businesses have a voice in government and call out Trump's proposed tax cuts for billionaires and corporations.

As shadow defense secretary, Congressman ADAM SMITH, a great Representative for the people of Washington, and not a FOX News host, could counter Trump's threat to use military force against his political opponents and work to ensure the Department of Defense stays loyal to the Constitution and not some wannabe dictator.

Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH could argue against cuts to the Department of Veterans Affairs that would delay the benefits and care our servicemembers have so rightly earned.

If Trump hands over the EPA to Big Oil ally Lee Zeldin, we could see Congresswoman KATHY CASTOR pushing back for environmental protection and conservation to protect the air we breathe and the water we drink.

If Trump pushes to ban abortion nationwide, Congresswoman ROSA DELAURIO could step in as shadow sec-

retary of health and human services to defend women's right to choose and argue against the gutting of Medicare by Trump and his cronies.

Mr. Speaker, new times require new solutions. The shadow cabinet isn't just about opposing extreme MAGA attacks on our government; it is also about making clear what we stand for, not just what we are against. It is time to show, not just to say, what we believe in: justice, accountability, and democracy.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF WILLIAM NOEL "BILLY" LAWLESS

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solemn remembrance of William Noel "Billy" Lawless, a member of the Irish Senate, immigration activist, successful entrepreneur, pillar of the community, and proud Irish American.

Born in Galway, Ireland, where he was raised on a dairy farm, Billy saw President John F. Kennedy give a speech as a young boy when our first Irish-American U.S. President visited Ireland in 1963.

After that experience, he knew he wanted to move abroad to the United States. In the meantime, he prospered in Galway, becoming a beloved part of his community, successfully owning and operating a restaurant and pub.

His boyhood dream of coming to America persisted. At 48 years old, he made it a reality. An accomplished rower in his own right, set to represent Ireland in the 1976 Olympic Games until he withdrew to care for his ill father, it was his daughter moving to the East Coast to row that helped him make the final decision.

Billy arrived in the U.S. in the late 1990s. He opened The Irish Oak pub in Chicago, Illinois. Billy would go on to open many successful restaurants and be a leader in the Chicago hospitality industry.

However, that was not the only thing that occupied his time. He had begun to hear a common story: people who had overstayed their visas but didn't want to leave the communities that they had grown to love so much in the United States. His Irish heritage informed his commitment to others who struggled for citizenship like himself.

Billy became a leader in the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and cofounded the Chicago Celts for Immigration Reform. In 2014, he introduced President Barack Obama at the Copernicus Center for a speech on immigration reform. That same year, both he and his beloved wife, Anne, proudly became American citizens, one of the world's great privileges.

For St. Patrick's Day celebrations, you could often find him honoring the holiday at the White House.

Billy used his voice and identity as an immigrant himself to help others.