

Mildred C. Crump, a visionary leader and trailblazer from my beloved city of Newark, New Jersey, who passed away this past Sunday, December 1, 2024.

Mildred was a woman of many firsts. Her wisdom, guidance, and unwavering belief in justice helped shape my life and career and transformed the lives of so many others. As the first African-American woman elected to the Newark City Council and as the council's first woman president, Mildred broke barriers and demonstrated a steadfast commitment to equity, justice, and community empowerment.

Her dedication to improving the lives of others, whether through her pioneering work as New Jersey's first African-American braille teacher or her tireless advocacy for housing, education, and civil rights, has left an everlasting mark on our city, State, and Nation.

Council President Crump was more than a role model. She was a relentless advocate and champion for people and a brilliant community strategist. She blazed a path for so many and was always a source of unwavering support.

For those of us who had the honor of learning from her, we are grateful for her. Mildred's leadership, compassion, and vision will be profoundly missed. All Newarkers mourn the loss of this exceptional woman.

I send my deepest condolences to her children, Larry and Sheri, the rest of her family, and her loved ones.

I know Mildred's legacy and impact will live on. It lives in me and many others.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mildred C. Crump on behalf of all the little Black and Brown girls she inspired and provided a light to shine. We will love her forever.

RECOGNIZING AUSTIN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, tonight is the beloved annual tradition of the National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, and I rise to recognize the Austin Area School District's contributions to this display.

The Austin Area School District in Potter County, Pennsylvania, is the smallest public school in Pennsylvania. The school serves approximately 180 prekindergarten through 12th grade students from the surrounding communities and excels in creating innovative, personalized one-on-one experiences for their students.

This year, the Austin Area School District was selected to decorate the Pennsylvania tree, which is part of the Pathway of Peace, a display of 58 smaller trees representing each State, territory, and the District of Columbia.

The National Park Foundation and the National Park Service annually present the National Christmas Tree lighting on the Ellipse at the White House and President's Park.

This celebration began in 1923 and brings together families, friends, and communities to celebrate the holidays in one of America's national parks.

With collaboration from the National Park Service, Department of Education, and National Park Foundation, local schools from each State decorate their trees with ornaments honoring their unique traditions and heritage.

When tasked with creating ornaments for the trees, students were asked: "What makes your State beautiful?" Pennsylvania is rich in history and natural beauty, and Potter County has a distinctive lifestyle.

Austin Area School District's art teacher, Mrs. Bethany Brown, and English teacher, Mrs. Megan Walck, had students create a list of what makes our region feel like home. Students considered Pennsylvania's outdoor activities like hunting, fishing, kayaking, camping, and stargazing, as well as historic events significant to Potter County.

This attraction is open December 7 through January 1, and visitors viewing the Pennsylvania tree will see that our students showcase many unique attributes of Potter County.

The ornaments highlight a variety of experiences unique to Pennsylvania, such as our number one industry, agriculture, and Potter County's rich history of potato farming. Local farms in Potter County supply potatoes nationwide. Maple syrup production thrives in our region thanks to the abundance of forests and maple trees. Each year, at the annual Maple Festival, the county celebrates the maple season with pancake breakfasts and open houses at maple producers' facilities. There are many more ornaments that showcase Pennsylvania's natural beauty.

The Pennsylvania Wilds region is a remarkable resource for those eager to explore Pennsylvania's natural wonders. Unique attractions like the Coudersport Ice Mine, which produces ice even during the summer heat, add to the area's charm and are reflected in the students' ornament designs.

Potter County serves as the source of major river systems, including the Allegheny River, which is also represented on the Pennsylvania State tree.

Visitors will see that students also incorporated our State tree, flower, and various native animals into their design. The ornaments made by the Austin Area School District students promote some of Potter County's and Pennsylvania's proudest attractions.

When reflecting on this experience, Austin Area School District student Breanna G. said: "Having the opportunity to create a design that not only symbolizes me but my school and the area around me is so special. I feel so proud to have been given this chance,

and I hope that someone will see this ornament and agree with the beauty of Pennsylvania's land. I am also thankful to my teacher, Mrs. Brown, for introducing us to this idea and letting us be as creative as we want. This is a project that I will remember for a very long time."

Participation in the arts is wonderful for a young person's development. It can inspire confidence that often extends far beyond the classroom. Teachers like Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Walck nurture creativity and play a valuable role in shaping curious minds.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Austin Area School District students, staff, and faculty for bringing Pennsylvania's Christmas spirit to our Nation's Capital and highlighting what makes Potter County such a special place to live and visit.

Mr. Speaker, as Breanna G. so nicely quoted, it is an experience we will all remember for a very long time. I am incredibly proud of our students and their contributions to this cherished national tradition.

PAC MONEY IN POLITICS

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

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the unholy alliance between soulless wealth and power that is stripping away Americans' freedom.

The reality is that, in 2024, 150 billionaires spent \$1.9 billion on this election. Seventy-two percent of Americans—Republicans, Independents, and Democrats—are outraged with money in politics.

We did not fight the Revolution to be spectators in a game of billionaires putting ads on our television sets and mobile phones.

We have more dignity. We have more power as American citizens. Our Founders would be rolling over in their graves if they saw what has become of modern American democracy.

There was \$2.7 billion of super-PAC spending—and let me tell you something, only 1 percent of Americans gave more than \$200. Who has more than \$200 to give to politicians? The money has become more important than votes.

Surely, we could agree in this body to ban super-PACs and overturn Citizens United. Short of that, surely we could agree with what Maine overwhelmingly did to restrict contributions to super-PACs. Why should it be that a politician can receive a contribution of only up to \$3,300, but somehow super-PACs should be allowed to get millions of dollars?

We need to make sure, like in Maine, in every State that, at the very least, super-PACs are restricted so billionaires aren't buying our elections. I founded the No PAC Caucus in the United States Congress. We need to end PAC money, the lobbyist money that is corrupting the soul of our democracy.

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We may not agree on every issue, but when you look at why politicians sold our jobs overseas, why Wall Street raided our manufacturers and hollowed out industry after industry to worship shareholder profits, then you have to look at the influence billionaires have had on our democracy.

Let's return power to our citizens. Let's ban super-PACs. Let's at least regulate billionaires from contributing to super-PACs. Let's ban Members from accepting PAC and lobbyist money. That will be worthy of our time in Congress.

HONORING MAYOR ED HONEA

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

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life and legacy of my friend, Marana Mayor Ed Honea, who passed away unexpectedly on November 22nd.

One of southern Arizona's most influential leaders, Ed was a pillar of his community who dedicated himself to serving the residents of Marana with steadfast resolve and a genuine passion.

A third-generation resident of Marana, Ed's roots ran deep in the community he served and loved so very much. Ed graduated from Marana High School and went on to serve his country during the Vietnam war as a member of the Navy and he was a lifetime member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5990 in Marana.

For Ed, politics was never an end to itself. He was deeply driven by his desire to make tangible improvements in his community. His career in public service spanned 37 years, across 3 terms on the town council, including serving as mayor since 2005. He was very committed to improving transportation infrastructure, strengthening public safety, and promoting economic growth in Marana and across the region.

He often reminded me and, quite frankly, everyone around him that he started calling me Congressman way before I even decided to go for this job.

I am deeply proud of the strong Federal-local partnership Ed and I built to benefit our constituents. In total, we worked together to preliminarily direct over \$4 million in Federal funding in Marana.

However, it was more than just a mayor-Congressman relationship. To both of us, it was just two friends working together for our communities.

Ed's legacy of servant leadership will have a positive impact in his community long into the future.

Laura and I will continue to keep his family, friends, and loved ones in our thoughts and prayers.

As we remember Mayor Ed Honea, let us honor his memory by continuing the work he was so passionate about, building stronger communities and helping

each other succeed. I will surely miss my friend.

ONSHORING AUTO AND STEEL MANUFACTURING

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I hail from the manufacturing heart of automotive and truck USA, right at the Ohio-Michigan border. As this new year beckons, Congress must do what it can, as the old saying goes, to reconnect the U.S. head bone to its neck bone.

Specifically, as co-chair of the House Auto Caucus, this means we must reshore ownership here in the USA of the Chrysler Group and its key suppliers. What America makes and grows here in America makes and grows America.

The popular Jeep Wrangler, Ram truck, and the American steel that should go into them create two of the most popular purchased vehicles in our country and world. Just these two vehicles represent a major manufacturing sector for our heartland that was traded away by Wall Street to Europe.

As a result, thousands upon thousands of skilled workers at production platforms in Toledo, Ohio; Sterling Heights, Michigan; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, are now being idled before the holidays.

Why is it always right before the holidays?

Meanwhile, the purveyors of vast wealth actually harm the workers that create the very wealth that benefit those billionaires. The ownership of the production was moved to Europe, and their billionaire enablers and buddies on Wall Street from the world of high finance keep trading away their livelihoods.

America's truck, automobile, steel, and auto parts manufacturing workers have had enough. They deserve respect.

Wouldn't the holiday season be happier if Congress could reassure thousands and thousands of Jeep and Ram workers a better future?

The current Jeep Stellantis CEO, Carlos Tavares, is stepping down. He lives in Europe. After his dreadful 10 years as leader of this lodestar automobile company that was created in this country, he earns a whopping \$43 million a year, not counting all his perks and stock options. He just got another million-dollar raise. After his dreadful—I can't even call it leadership—heading the company, he just got rewarded that additional million dollars. Meanwhile, workers in Toledo and Sterling Heights get pink-slipped and hit the unemployment lines. How cruel. This has to stop.

Production pauses were announced just before Thanksgiving as we head into the holiday season. That is downright un-American.

It is long overdue for America to be American again. Wall Street traders

should bring back ownership of Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge to the United States of America. It is overdue to put real car builders in charge, not Wall Street traders nor hapless CEOs from another country.

The outgoing Biden administration and the incoming Trump administration must direct attention to what is occurring right at the Ohio-Michigan border. This region is the heart of the industrial Midwest, where people make and build our real wealth, not just trade it away.

Our people don't live in virtual reality or stock options. We live in places where iron sharpens iron—some might say the agony and the ecstasy of producing America's real wealth. Yet we have seen it traded away time and again, decade after decade as oligarchs and billionaires who could care less about America get richer off the sweat of our people.

This is a wake-up call for the current and future President of the United States. Hear our call. Reshore ownership of our Chrysler-Jeep-Dodge platform, both in the automotive and trucking industry. Lift up the industrial heartland of America.

As we reshore the ownership and production of our Nation's most popular vehicles, we also ensure that those who own the means of production have to live in the same reality as those who build these cars and trucks.

Both Presidents Trump and Biden have said America should stop the sale of U.S. Steel to Japanese Nippon Steel. I agree with that. Americans who are potential buyers wait in the wings. Engage them. Include those that forge quality steel that is a critical component of both our rugged Rams and Jeeps.

American steel in American cars, doesn't that sound good?

My hope for the USA is that we reclaim ownership of what we created in the first place. Our workers know it. They have surely earned it. The future of generations across our industrial heartland and Nation depends on America restoring America again. What America makes and builds makes and builds America. Bring Jeep and Ram back to the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING UNITED INFRASTRUCTURE GROUP

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

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, before I got into the political arena, I was in the family construction and development business. It was seldom that I ever heard of or witnessed a company that stayed in business for 20, 50, or 70 years, and especially not 100 years.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate United Infrastructure Group, a South Carolina company that has done just that. It has been a successful business