

legislators who work across the aisle to get things done. Until my term ends, I am doing everything I can to restore their trust in our systems, to stand up for them against rogue politicians, and to fight back against bills like SB 382.

My constituents deserve better, and the American people deserve better.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President-elect.

#### HONORING CLEMENCIA ESTEVIZ ON HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

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 truly remarkable woman from Alamo, Texas, Clemencia Esteviz, who recently celebrated her 100th birthday on November 22.

From her early days at working in the fields to her dedicated service to the Diocese of Brownsville, Clemencia has lived a life filled with resilience, hard work, and unwavering devotion to her family and to others.

Her family treasures the warmth that she brings to every Christmas gathering, where her tamale-making traditions have created many cherished memories for generations. She has extended her nurturing spirit beyond her immediate family, raising her niece's child as her own.

I wish Clemencia a happy birthday and congratulate her on this incredible milestone.

#### EMERGENCY AID

Ms. DE LA CRUZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to sound the alarm for our farmers in south Texas and American food security. South Texas farmers are facing a crisis due to the Mexican Government's failure to honor its water obligations under the 1944 water treaty. This neglect has left over 960,000 acre-feet of water undelivered, devastating our agricultural sector.

The Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, after 50 years, has shut down, taking 500 American jobs with it. Our citrus and our vegetable farmers have seen millions in losses, and row crop yields are down 40 percent. Without immediate action, more livelihoods will be destroyed.

Keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, food security is national security. That is why I have introduced H.R. 10113, the South Texas Agriculture Emergency Assistance Act. This bill provides \$280 million in emergency aid to our farmers.

Earlier in 2024, water was selling for around \$300 per acre-foot. At that amount, the value of the water deficit is about \$280 million, the amount we are requesting in emergency aid. This does not come close to equaling the losses to producers, but it is a starting point for funds needed to aid the region.

Mr. Speaker, I urge leadership to include this legislation in any emergency aid bill that comes to the floor.

Let's stand with our farmers and ensure that they have the resources to recover and thrive, which ultimately means American farmers feed American citizens and that we do not depend on foreign actors for our food.

#### HONORING VELETER MAZYCK

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

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor an individual whose service, character, and dedication have left an indelible mark on this institution and the people it serves.

I first met Veleter M.B. Mazyck in 2017 when I was selected to participate in the CBC Institute boot camp. I could not have known then that 4 years later Veleter would become not only my chief of staff but also a trusted adviser, confidante, and unwavering partner in serving the people of Ohio's 11th Congressional District.

A steady hand who had served my predecessor for more than a decade, Veleter has been vital to the success of my office ever since.

As she prepares to retire, I rise to recognize a career defined by integrity, selflessness, and an unwavering commitment to public service.

Too often the contributions of congressional staff remain behind the scenes, unnoticed by the public but essential to our democracy. Far from the cameras, the House Chamber, or the committee dais, staff work long hours. They are driven by a deep and abiding sense of duty.

Veleter Mazyck personifies this culturally, spiritually, and professionally. She is known for being both wise and witty, spontaneous and strategic, careful and kind, thoughtful and thorough, but, most importantly, a loving, loyal, steady, and steadfast steward of our Nation. She is a calm and commanding force behind every success.

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Mr. Speaker, I rise to etch the name of Veleter Mazyck into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, ensuring her legacy endures for years to come.

An unsung hero of this institution, Veleter committed herself to honing the skills and talents the Lord had blessed her with, to bending the moral arc of the universe a little bit closer to justice, and to ensuring our government serves its people with respect, dignity, and compassion.

After a celebrated career as a general counsel to large metropolitan school districts, Veleter agreed to serve as Congresswoman FUDGE's chief of staff for 1 year or maybe 2. Yet, a decade later, Veleter was still here, a cornerstone of the office, the Congress, and, dare I say, the country and the Constitution.

Through her efforts, legislative priorities were championed with purpose and passion; crises were managed with character and charisma; and partner-

ships were forged, both publicly and privately, all with the goal of creating a better future for the people of Ohio's 11th Congressional District.

Following my predecessor's appointment to President Joe Biden's Cabinet, Veleter skillfully managed the office during the transition, ensuring constituents continued to receive the support that they needed.

Upon my swearing in, her wealth of experience and knowledge allowed me to competently step into my role. Ever since, Veleter's deep understanding of this institution has been invaluable.

In moments of uncertainty, Veleter was the steady hand navigating challenges with poise and resolve. In moments of triumph, she didn't celebrate personal accolades but the victories achieved for the people of northeast Ohio. In every moment in between, she exemplified the highest standards of professionalism and dedication.

What truly sets Veleter apart is her ability to bring out the best in those around her. Whether mentoring young staffers or building coalitions with colleagues, she led with patience, humility, and a genuine belief in the power of collaboration.

After 13 years, the countless individuals she has impacted, from colleagues to constituents, are a testament to the lasting influence she has had on all who have worked with her.

As Veleter steps away from Capitol Hill, I know that her contributions will continue to ripple outward. The legacy she leaves is one of progress, integrity, and hope.

Veleter, throughout her career, has often spoken about the importance of getting off the dance floor. It was, as she says, her role as a leader to get to the balcony to see the bigger picture.

As she retires, it is time to leave both the balcony and the dance floor behind. Now, the stage is hers to set. Whether it is traveling, writing, or pursuing new passions, retirement is her front-row seat to a life of her own design.

I thank Veleter on behalf of a grateful Congress, a grateful district, and a grateful Nation. I thank her for her vision, virtue, and vigilance. We are better because of her sacrifice and for her unwavering commitment to see a nation not for what it was but for what it could be.

We wish Veleter all the best in her well-earned retirement with full confidence that her impact on this institution and the Nation it serves will live on for generations to come.

#### RECOGNIZING RYAN JARMULA

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and express my gratitude to a long-time trusted adviser for the Pence family.

Ryan Jarmula, my chief of staff, has been a part of this team since the very

beginning. He counseled my brother, Michael, first, working with him in this body and then the Governor's office.

President Trump saw his incredible value, leading to Ryan's service in the Trump-Pence administration Office of Speechwriting, in which he helped me in my term here. His future was limitless, but to my good fortune, Ryan agreed to join my team when I was elected to office.

For years, he has been my eyes and ears in the district, giving my constituents the support that they deserved while I was here in Washington. From scheduling to communications to policy, Ryan can do it all.

Despite Ryan's expertise, he is a humble man. He would never ask anyone to do something he isn't willing to do himself. A leader can only be respected to the extent he respects others, and Ryan exemplifies this principle. Our staff is successful because they are led by someone who sees their value, someone who supports them and wants the best for their future.

I would not have been the legislator I am without his wise counsel, levelheadedness, and strong spirit.

As we close this chapter in Congress, I am beyond grateful for Ryan, his beautiful family, and his friendship, and I look forward to watching his career unfold.

Mr. Speaker, may God bless Ryan.

RECOGNIZING LANI CZARNIECKI

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of the most trusted advisers and a dear family friend of all the Pences. Since 2001, Lani Czarniecki has counseled the Pence family as the longest-serving Pence staffer.

When my brother, Michael, started in the House of Representatives, he needed someone he could trust back in the district. He found that in Lani.

When Michael returned to Indiana as Governor, Lani faithfully followed him to support our State. In the White House, Lani was one of the first people who Michael hired.

I myself was blessed when Lani agreed to join my office, giving me aid and support in a way no one else could.

Lani knows Indiana and service, but even more so, Lani knows people, and everybody knows Lani. He is a people person, someone who never meets a stranger. Always a calming presence in the room, everyone who meets Lani is immediately drawn to him. They see his kindness and character from the very first moment they meet him.

Lani is a role model for what public service should be. Throughout my time in office, I have turned to his counsel time and time again, knowing that he will always tell me the truth.

Indiana and this country are better because of Lani's work, and I am a better man because of Lani. I cannot thank him enough for his years of service, and I look forward to many more years of friendship to come.

Mr. Speaker, may God bless Lani.

RECOGNIZING MISTY HOLLIS

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to take a moment to honor a dear

friend and public servant in Richmond, Indiana, and throughout the State of Indiana.

Any Republican who seeks office in Indiana would do well to consider Misty Hollis' trusted counsel. In fact, Misty was one of the first calls I placed when I declared myself a candidate for this seat some 7 years ago.

Misty has long served as the Sixth District Republican chair and was named in 2015 as the Indiana Federation of Republican Women's Woman of the Year.

Misty is the executive director and CEO of the Richmond Family YMCA, served two terms on the Richmond Common Council, and served in roles for Wayne County and Richmond Community Schools.

Misty is a true public servant and role model for so many. She gives so much of her time, talent, and treasure to better her community. Even throughout her recent health struggles, Misty has always put others first. I cannot say enough how much we care for and admire Misty and her beloved husband, Tim.

We thank them both for their friendship, and may God bless Misty Hollis.

#### THE HONORABLE GRACE F. NAPOLITANO'S FAREWELL REMARKS

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

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in this Chamber one last time as a most humble Representative of the 31st District of California.

Mr. Speaker, I am incredibly grateful to the people of San Gabriel Valley and southeastern Los Angeles County for the trust that they have placed in me for the last 26 years. It has been my distinct pleasure and honor to serve them and to work tirelessly with them on issues that directly impact our district and our region.

Born in Brownsville, Texas, to an immigrant mother and a father from San Antonio, I have worked since the age of 12 for everything I have achieved. I was not expected to succeed with only a high school diploma. I believed in myself and was helped and mentored by so many people who believed in me.

I have been extremely fortunate to have made so many dear friends in the House, and it has been a great joy to serve alongside them. Past and current colleagues from all walks of life have enriched this whole experience, been friends and family, and have helped me better serve my constituents.

I especially thank my colleagues in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Natural Resources Committee, Congressional Mental Health Caucus, Youth Challenge Caucus, and so many others. I thank them all for their partnership, mentorship, and collegiality.

I express my gratitude to my extraordinary staff, most of whom have been with me for the majority of my time in Congress. I have the best staff in Washington. They are the most knowledgeable in water, transportation, and mental health, led by my wonderful chief of staff, Joe Sheehy, Jerry O'Donnell, Joseph Ciccone, Morgan Leonard, Sam Schiller, and Daniel Chao, my former chief of staff. They have always been accessible, polite, and helpful.

I also thank my incredible staff on the Subcommittee of Water Resources and Environment, Ryan Seiger, Logan Ferree, and Alexa Williams, all in the gallery.

In my district, my staff has always been in the community, meeting with residents, local agency staff, and volunteers to improve how the Federal Government services and invests in our community. They have dealt with hundreds of casework issues every year, getting veterans their proper benefits, Medicare recipients their proper care, and recent immigrants their proper status in the United States.

They have been led by my district chief of staff, Perla Hernandez Trumkul, Elena Robles, Robert Pence, Carrie Lam, Leandra Berdin, Tracey Cooper-Harris, and Irma Elisheva Diaz.

I thank my current staff and all previous staff in both offices for their service to our community and our Nation.

I also thank the countless hard-working staff who make Congress run smoothly. These are the cafeteria workers, custodians, post office workers and letter carriers, and so many other employees of the AOC and CAO; the always-helpful Democratic Cloakroom staff; stenographers; employees of the Clerk, who always assist with legislative business; the friendly lady in the Lindy Boggs Reading Room; the incredible doctors, nurses, physical therapists, and medical staff in the Office of Attending Physician; the many brave Capitol Police officers, who protect us all; and so many others.

Lastly, I am incredibly grateful for my remarkable, supportive, and loving family. Each and every one of them has provided the encouragement, guidance, and love that has sustained me through my 26 years of Federal service and 13 years of prior State and local service.

My husband, Frank, was my rock and my greatest encouragement.

My children have taken care of many family obligations while I have been away in Washington.

My beautiful grandchildren and 13 fabulous great-grandchildren have been my inspiration to make America a better place for future generations.

I thank my son Fred and his family—his wife, Norma, and Freddie, Veronica, Elizabeth, Andrea, Niko, Nolan, Brooklyn, my first great-great-grandchild on the way, and Daniel. I thank my son Edward and his family—Kelly, Bryan, Nathaniel, Scott, Nick, and Danielle; my son Mike and Lourdes; my daughter Cynthia and her husband, Curt, and