

RECOGNIZING THE HEROIC
ACTIONS OF CARTER NICELY

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

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the courageous actions of 16-year-old Carter Nicely from Alleghany County who heroically saved the lives of his family as their home was engulfed in flames earlier this year.

As dawn broke, Carter was awakened by an extraordinary heat. Attempting to turn on his bedside lamp, he quickly realized the electricity was out. Without hesitation, he sprang into action, rushing to warn his parents, Anthony and Kristin Nicely, and his younger brother, Brody, of the imminent danger.

Thanks to Carter's swift actions, his family was able to evacuate their home safely, though they tragically lost everything in the fire.

In recognition of his bravery, the Sharon Fire and Rescue team awarded Carter a lifesaving award, a commendation they have only bestowed once before.

Mr. Speaker, I, once again, congratulate Carter Nicely on his quick thinking and decisive action which undoubtedly saved lives.

CELEBRATING STRASBURG PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH'S 200TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Strasburg Presbyterian Church as it proudly celebrates 200 years of service.

The church was founded in 1824 by a small, dedicated group of Christians under the leadership of Reverend Dr. William Henry Foote, a Princeton graduate who came to the Shenandoah Valley to provide English language services for residents primarily speaking German.

Notably, Strasburg Presbyterian is the only church in town to withstand the Civil War, even serving as a hospital for wounded Confederate and Union soldiers after the pivotal battles of Cedar Creek and Fisher's Hill.

Today, under the guidance of Reverend David Howard, the church goes beyond traditional worship and Sunday school. It actively participates in community initiatives such as blood drives, Bible studies, pancake breakfasts, and spaghetti dinners.

With 90 active members, many of whom are multigenerational families, Reverend Howard envisions a bright future for the church, embodying the spirit of community service with the belief that "it is about putting your community before yourself."

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Strasburg Presbyterian Church for its unwavering commitment to service and hope the church continues to bless our community for another 200 years.

CELEBRATING THE ROANOKE STAR'S 75TH
ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a beacon of hope and community pride in my district: the Roa-

noke Star. It was on the eve of Thanksgiving in 1949 at exactly 8:22 p.m. when a star was illuminated for the first time atop the most prominent mountain in the heart of the city of Roanoke, Virginia.

What began as a Christmas decoration, this man-made metal star has now become an enduring symbol of our community spirit for 75 glorious years.

Built by Roy Kinsey of the Kinsey Sign Company for \$28,000, this impressive structure towers 88.5 feet tall, proudly visible from as far away as 60 miles. With 2,000 feet of neon tubing ready to shine in red, white, and blue, the Roanoke Star is not just any star; it is the largest freestanding illuminated star in the world.

Visitors come from countless places to witness this treasured landmark, take in the breathtaking view of the Roanoke Valley, explore scenic trails, or enjoy the nearby Mill Mountain Zoo. The Roanoke Star is recognized on both the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register, reminding us of our heritage and commitment to preserving our history.

As we mark this 75th anniversary, let us celebrate the Roanoke Star's significance in Virginia's Sixth District, and may it continue to shine as a welcoming beacon for all who visit.

RECOGNIZING EDUCATORS IN THE
18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
OF TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MEUSER). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Mrs. LEE CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LEE CARTER. Mr. Speaker, as a former first grade teacher in Houston, I rise to honor remarkable educators from school districts in the 18th Congressional District of Texas whose dedication and impact inspires students and strengthens our community.

The Aldine Independent School District, led by Dr. LaTonya M. Goffney, serves over 67,000 students.

Amanda Lee is the Elementary Teacher of the Year from Carmichael Elementary. She fosters hands-on learning in an environment where every child is empowered to succeed.

Leticia Vargas is the Secondary Teacher of the Year from Davis High School and engages students with culturally relevant lessons and provides vital mentorship.

Rosalind Burns is the Principal of the Year from Jones Primary and has transformed her school with innovative programs and enhanced student engagement and achievement.

Next, from the Houston Independent School District, of which I am a proud graduate, our largest district in the 18th District, is Jasmine Campbell, a leader in digital tools and classroom collaboration. She empowers her students and peers through mentorship and innovation.

Alondra Lachney Mejia, a special education teacher, tirelessly supports

students with unique differences to help them overcome challenges.

Yusheba Moses is the counseling manager, and she has devoted 20 years to guiding students and counselors, driving positive change across the district. She reminds me a lot of my favorite guidance counselor, Felicia Doyle, who invested in me when I was in high school.

From the Humble Independent School District that serves 48,000 students, we have Camron Bradford, the Secondary Teacher of the Year at Summer Creek High School, who supports student well-being with compassionate lessons like "it is okay to not be okay."

Jasmine Thomas, the Elementary School Teacher of the Year at Autumn Creek Elementary, creates a kind and inclusive classroom with imaginative storytelling.

James Linse, a special education teacher at Lakeland Elementary, connects lessons to real-world scenarios, empowering his students.

From the Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District, which is led by superintendent Dr. Douglas Killian and serves over 118,000 students, we have London Martin. London is a fifth-grade teacher at Francone Elementary, who achieved 100 percent participation in a district math program by fostering strong relationships with her students.

Jasmine Bookman, a sixth-grade math teacher at Campbell Middle School, inspires growth through her dedication to academic and personal development.

William "Frank" Patterson, a Navy veteran at the Carpenter Center, uplifts students with his unwavering support and generosity, including home-cooked meals.

The Spring Independent School District, led by Dr. Lupita Hinojosa, serves over 33,000 students and just this past Monday, renamed its Family and Community Engagement Center after my mother, the Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee.

I salute Rosemary Perez, a bilingual teacher at Donna Lewis Elementary, who uses innovative strategies to foster growth in her bilingual students.

Dr. Clara Thompson, who is a college counselor at Westfield High School, has guided countless students, including many first generation, to success over her 31-year career.

Scott Sims, a government teacher at Westfield High School, enriches his students' learning with his background in community service and support for many extracurriculars.

These educators remind us that teaching is not just a profession but a calling to shape future generations. Their unwavering commitment to excellence deserves our gratitude and continued support.

I commit my full support to policies that help close the achievement gap, support teachers, principals, and students, and help our public schools address 21st century needs.

Let us not go back to suppressing freedom of speech and ideas that help our schools remain true centers of learning.

Mr. Speaker, I thank these educators for their tireless dedication to our children and communities to truly make America the best place to be.

RECOGNIZING OFFICERS IN THE ALTOONA POLICE DEPARTMENT ON THEIR CAPTURE OF LUIGI MANGIONE

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the officers of the Altoona Police Department for their professionalism, their bravery, and their quick response that led to the arrest and the capture of Luigi Mangione, the suspect in the killing of UnitedHealthcare CEO, Brian Thompson.

When a call came from the McDonald's restaurant on Plank Road in Altoona, Officers Tyler Frye and Joseph Detwiler immediately moved into action, working quickly to apprehend the suspect before he could flee. It was their questioning and their police work that ultimately led to his arrest, putting to rest a national manhunt.

With only 6 months on the job, Officer Tyler Frye's career is off to a significant start, and I am grateful to him and for all 66 officers of the Altoona Police Department that is led by Chief of Police, Joe Merrill.

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While high-profile, this arrest is just a small part of the incredible work that these officers do each and every day to protect the community.

Whether it is patrolling our streets, working to stop the flow of fentanyl and other illicit drugs into our communities, or doing outreach at our schools, the officers of the Altoona Police Department are a strong example of what is best about our community.

On behalf of everyone in Blair County and throughout Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank the officers of the Altoona Police Department for their commitment to protect and serve the community.

AMERICAN PEOPLE DESERVE BETTER

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

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, this Congress is about to vote to pass another obscene military budget when the Pentagon just failed its seventh audit in a row. That is nearly a trillion dollars going to weapons and war.

When it comes to the Pentagon budget, not a single one of my colleagues asks: How are we going to pay for it?

Why is it, then, when it comes to addressing critical issues here like hun-

ger, poverty, our broken healthcare system, or clean water, they tell me that we don't have the money.

However, even more disturbing for many of my residents and the American people is that many of my colleagues in this Chamber are profiting personally, financially when they vote to pass more funding for war.

I introduced the Stop Politicians Profiting from War Act, which bans Members of Congress and their families from owning defense stocks. My colleagues should not be able to use their positions of power to get rich from defense contractors while voting to pass more funding for war. Our elected officials should not be able to profit off of death. The American people deserve better.

FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, this holiday season, too many of our children are going to bed hungry while colleagues vote to pass nearly a trillion dollars for war. In the richest country in the world, millions of our children live in poverty, lacking access to necessities like food, shelter, and healthcare.

More than 44 million people across our Nation face hunger, including 15 percent in our Wayne County community in the 12th Congressional District.

SNAP is a key tool in combating hunger. It has been very successful in helping vulnerable communities like ours, and it remains the most vital line of defense against hunger. However, many of my Republican colleagues want to continue to cut this essential program.

We must protect and expand the social safety net and increase funding for SNAP and other programs to combat hunger. Working families in our country should not have to worry about where their next meal is coming from. Children cannot learn, Mr. Speaker, when they are hungry.

By investing in universal school meals, we can ensure every child has access to resources needed to thrive at school. SNAP families only receive an average of about \$6 a day per person. That is it. We must not only protect this incredibly important food assistance program, but expand it to make sure it actually covers the growing cost of groceries.

We know that our families are getting price gouged every single day at the grocery store. If this body has money for endless wars, we must surely find the resources to end child hunger in our country.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I will read into the RECORD something from a recent report. It said: "Israel has forcibly displaced 90 percent of Gaza's 2.2 million inhabitants, many of them multiple times, into ever-shrinking, ever-changing pockets of land that lacked basic infrastructure, forcing people to live in conditions that exposed them to slow and calculated death. It has deliberately obstructed or denied the import and delivery of lifesaving goods and hu-

manitarian aid. It has restricted power supplies that, together with damage and destruction, led to the collapse of the water, sanitation, and healthcare systems."

Mr. Speaker, I just quoted from Amnesty International's 296-page report concluding that Israel's Government is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, as defined in international law by the Genocide Convention.

Mr. Speaker, I insert in the RECORD a hyperlink to Amnesty International's "You Feel Like You Are Subhuman": Israel's Genocide Against Palestinians in Gaza." This report confirms what we have known for months. My colleagues can no longer deny this is genocide.

The hyperlink is: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/8668/2024/en>.

NDAА REFLECTS REPUBLICAN PRIORITIES

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

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, today I—I think we will—rise in strong support for the fiscal year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act, known as the NDAA.

The world, Mr. Speaker, is an increasingly dangerous place, and the threats we are facing continue to evolve. Over the past 4 years, we have witnessed Ukraine under siege, Taiwan under constant pressure from China, and on that fateful day, October 7, Israel was attacked—devastated, massacred, brutalized—by Iran and its proxies, and they responded. We have also witnessed the persistent threat of terrorism, Mr. Speaker, in Africa and the drug cartels creating continued danger and death closer to home.

These are not just far-off challenges, Mr. Speaker. They directly impact our national security, economic stability around the world, and the safety of the American people.

This bill is about making the necessary investments to ensure that the United States remains the most powerful military in the world. It supports our troops and ensures they have the resources they need to carry out their missions safely and effectively. It provides for weapons upgrades, the development of cutting-edge technologies, and revitalization of the defense industrial base, ensuring our readiness to face all adversaries.

Too often, we hear stories of military families struggling to make ends meet, and that is simply unacceptable. This bill takes a stand for them, providing better pay and support so that no servicemember ever has to rely upon food stamps to feed their family.

Let's address those who oppose this bill because it doesn't include more social engineering or ideological experiments. The United States military is not a social engineering experiment. It