

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.

□ 1100

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

is a fighting force designed to protect our Nation and ensure global stability.

The American people as well should be confident that with Pete Hegseth, President Trump's pick for Secretary of Defense, at the helm we can trust that the Department of Defense will prioritize ending divisive ideologies and enhancing military readiness.

As well, there are some who argue we could cut more from defense spending. This bill represents a modest 1 percent increase over last year's budget, but it is a critical investment in our safety and future.

Do we need more efficiency measures? Yes, we DOGE.

Next year, with the new administration, we will make our defense spending leaner, sharper, and more effective and always putting America first.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is about prioritizing what truly matters: military readiness, modernization, and the security of the American people rather than a social and ideological agenda.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for this bill and in supporting our troops.

2025 NDAA DELIVERS CRITICAL RESOURCES

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, supporting our servicemembers and their families is absolutely essential to ensuring our military readiness and ensuring the United States has the greatest fighting force in the world. That is why I and many are urging all our colleagues to support the NDAA, which we will be voting on tonight, which prioritizes the well-being of those who defend our freedom.

This bill delivers critical resources: improved housing through investments aimed at upgrading military facilities, better health coverage for servicemembers and their families, expanded accessibility of childcare and enhanced support for military spouses, including professional licensing portability programs.

It also authorizes a significant pay raise for servicemembers, with a 14.5 percent increase for junior enlisted personnel and a 4.5 percent for all other ranks. This will provide the recognition and compensation they have earned and deserve. As well, this legislation tackles pressing challenges facing our Nation, strengthens our southern border by allocating funding for advanced surveillance technology and additional personnel, counters rising aggression from China by supporting increased funding for Indo-Pacific defense initiatives, and reaffirms our unwavering commitment to Israel by authorizing continued funding for missile defense systems like the Iron Dome.

House Republicans are committed to cutting wasteful spending, slashing the so-called military bureaucracy, and standing with those who fight for our country. This NDAA reflects that commitment by ensuring our Armed Forces have the resources they need, whether on the front lines or here at home.

By passing this bill, we are making sure our military is prepared to meet

today's challenges while safeguarding the freedoms of tomorrow.

HONORING NIKKI GIOVANNI

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

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker:

I was born in the congo
I walked to the fertile crescent and built the sphinx
I designed a pyramid so tough that a star that only glows every one hundred years falls into the center giving divine perfect light

I am bad

I sat on the throne drinking nectar with allah

I got hot and sent an ice age to europe to cool my thirst

My oldest daughter is Nefertiti the tears from my birth pains created the Nile

I am a beautiful woman

I gazed on the forest and burned out the Sahara desert with a packet of goat's meat and a change of clothes

I crossed it in two hours

I am a gazelle so swift so swift you can't catch me

For a birthday present when he was three I gave my son hannibal an elephant

He gave me rome for mother's day

My strength flows ever on

My son noah built new/ark and I stood proudly at the helm as we sailed on a soft summer day

I turned myself into myself and was Jesus men intone my loving name

All praises All praises

I am the one who would save

I sowed diamonds in my back yard

My bowels deliver uranium the filings from my fingernails are semi-precious jewels

On a trip north

I caught a cold and blew

My nose giving oil to the Arab world

I am so hip even my errors are correct

I sailed west to reach east and had to round off the earth as I went

The hair from my head thinned and gold was laid across three continents

I am so perfect so divine so ethereal so surreal

I cannot be comprehended except by my permission

I mean . . . I . . . can fly like a bird in the sky . . .

Mr. Speaker, this poem, "ego-tripping," sparked my interest as a child, growing up in the South from my favorite poet, Nikki Giovanni, who passed earlier this week.

Nikki was one of the leading voices of the 1960s Black arts movement, with one writer naming her the "poet of the Black revolution." Her work focused on race, gender, politics, love, and joy. Through poetry, children and nonfiction books, and spoken word albums, she celebrated Black America and Black liberation. As a young girl, I could see myself reflected in her work.

She dedicated herself to uplifting and empowering other Black women writers, publishing an anthology of poetry written by Black women.

Nikki was a fierce voting rights advocate and fought to ensure everyone could make their voices heard at the ballot box.

She taught at several universities, culminating for 35 years at Virginia Tech, where she retired in 2022 as a distinguished professor of English. She received countless awards and accolades and was a groundbreaking literary giant.

When the Virginia Tech community mourned the lives of 32 people killed by a gunman in 2007, she honored them with a poem entitled, "We are Virginia Tech," in which she said:

We are sad today, and we will be sad for quite a while.

We are not moving on, we are embracing our mourning.

We are strong enough to stand tall tearlessly, we are brave enough to bend to cry, and we are sad enough to know that we must laugh again.

Nikki Giovanni has flown away home, and we will be sad for quite a while, but her words leave a lasting legacy that will continue to inspire generations to come.

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HONORING THE LIFE OF DANIEL HOWARD BRADLEY

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of Daniel Howard Bradley of Savannah, Georgia.

Mr. Bradley sadly passed away on December 3 in the presence of his family. Born at the old Telfair Hospital in Savannah, Mr. Bradley was a lifelong resident of Savannah. He attended local schools and earned his degree in industrial management from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Mr. Bradley was an extremely hardworking individual, serving as the president of the Dixie Plywood Company for over 56 years.

Mr. Bradley also remained active in the Georgia Tech community for many years. He served as a trustee of the Georgia Tech National Alumni Association, a member of the Georgia Tech National Advisory Board, and a member of the Georgia Tech Regional Engineering Program, and several others.

For over 76 years, Mr. Bradley was an active member of the Wesley Monumental United Methodist Church, serving on several boards within the community. It is here that I met Mr. Bradley, and I will tell you, he was one of the finest men I have ever met. He also served on the advisory board of the Salvation Army for two decades.

Mr. Bradley was a generous, faithful man, known by all for his integrity and loyalty. He will be greatly missed, and my heart goes out to his friends and family.

CONGRATULATING EFFINGHAM COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate five Effingham County Middle School students on their selection for the REACH Georgia scholarship.