

proudly enlisting in the United States Air Force, where he served honorably from 1957 to 1962.

Mr. Speaker, after leaving the Air Force, Peadar continued his civil service by joining the ranks of the New York Police Department as an officer and as a detective.

In 1962, Peadar found the great love of his life, Margaret, and their marriage spanned an extraordinary 62 years. Together, they raised three remarkable daughters, Kathleen, Rose-Marie, and Colleen, and built a family that became the heart and soul of Peadar's life.

Mr. Speaker, Peadar's roots in Ireland remained a cornerstone of his identity. Though he left its shores, Ireland was forever etched in his heart.

Peadar Fitzpatrick was, above all, a man of immense character, devoted to his faith, his family, and his community.

Today, we honor his legacy. We remember a life well lived and a man who was deeply loved. Peadar Fitzpatrick exemplified what it means to live a life of purpose, integrity, and heart.

May his soul pass through old Ireland, and may his soul remain at God's right hand.

RECOGNIZING WILLIAM ARROWOOD

(Mrs. SYKES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize William Arrowood from Akron as Ohio's 13th District Champion of the Week.

I am thrilled to announce that William is the 2024 Congressional App Challenge winner for our district. His app, titled: "How to Beat Bezos," is an innovative stock market simulator game that educates players on the nuances of buying and selling stocks for profit.

It is inspiring to see how William, a freshman at the National Inventors Hall of Fame STEM High School, combined his interest in the stock market with his passion and skill in computer science to create a fun and engaging tool that can benefit people of all ages.

As the winner of our district's Congressional App Challenge, William's app will be proudly displayed in the Capitol, where visitors from across the country and the world can appreciate his innovation and creativity.

I congratulate William again on being the winner of the Congressional App Challenge and this week's Champion of the Week for Ohio's 13th District.

I thank all the students who submitted apps this year. I look forward to seeing what William and our other talented students across the district create next year and for years to come.

STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S SECURITY AND SUPPORTING OUR MILITARY

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to help celebrate the passage finally this week of the National Defense Authorization Act, a key step in strengthening America's security and supporting our military. It was a strong, bipartisan vote showing there is unity on America's military.

The bill ensures our military has the tools, the resources, and the capabilities to promote readiness and deadliness. With its cutting-edge technology, critical infrastructure, and much-needed pay improvement for our soldiers and their housing, it is a broad approach that is really going to help with meeting the all-around needs of meeting those goals. It demonstrates a clear commitment to protecting our Nation and defending freedom for this country and our allies around the world.

Indeed, the best war to fight is the one you never have to fight. That is why, when we have a strong military that is ready, the deterrence factor is one of the best things we can have for avoiding conflict and avoiding unnecessary bloodshed.

We are sending a powerful message with this legislation. With the challenges we face as a country, the United States will always be ready to protect what matters most.

RECOGNIZING RONALD ROCHON

(Mr. CORREA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize California State University at Fullerton's new president, Dr. Ronald Rochon.

Dr. Rochon was born on the south side of Chicago where he founded and nurtured his passion for education and community service. He stepped into the top role at Cal State University at Fullerton, my alma mater, this past July.

Dr. Rochon brings 14 years of experience to southern California, having led the University of Southern Indiana through COVID-19 and a new athletic division.

As the proud Titan that I am, I am very excited to see Dr. Ronald Rochon at the helm. We are happy to see Ron at Cal State, Fullerton, and we look forward to working with him. Let's get busy.

RECOGNIZING ROBERT MIGUEL

(Mr. CRANE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent 14 of Arizona's Tribes. One

of the leaders I have been able to work with is Chairman Robert Miguel of the Ak-Chin Indian Community in Maricopa, Arizona, who will complete his final term this month due to term limits.

Chairman Miguel first joined the Ak-Chin Tribal Council in 2014 and was elected chairman in 2016. During this time he has been a strong leader focused on serving his community with an entrepreneurial spirit, creating jobs and economic growth and promoting educational opportunities.

We have worked together on efforts with the Indian Health Services, ensuring healthcare coverage for the Tribe, along with prioritizing flood control improvements with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The first time I met with Chairman Miguel, he shared with me the Ak-Chin slogan: "We all win with Ak-Chin."

I will remember his enthusiasm and hard work as we continue to work with the Tribe on important issues.

I thank Chairman Miguel for his leadership and service. I wish him the best in his future endeavors and know he will continue to make Ak-Chin proud.

FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCORMICK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MOONEY. Mr. Speaker, it has been the greatest honor of my life to serve the people of West Virginia in the United States House of Representatives over the past 10 years.

I was elected on November 4, 2014. Believe it or not, back then West Virginia wasn't a safe Republican State. I only won by 3 percentage points in a tough election. The good people of West Virginia's Second District have trusted me with the privilege by electing me four more times, so five times in total, to represent them for these past 10 years.

I did not seek reelection to the U.S. House of Representatives. I ran for another office, which I did not win, so my time will come to a close at noon on January 3. I have actually enjoyed educating a lot of folks about how this works here, and the Constitution dictates specifically the time at which you are no longer a Congressman. It is exactly at noon on January 3. And at that time, my 10 years in office will come to an end.

During my first 8 years in Congress, I represented 17 beautiful counties from the eastern panhandle of West Virginia, where I live, all the way down to Charleston and Kanawha County. That is the part in the red here through the middle of the State.

After the 2020 Census was done, West Virginia lost one of our three seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, so for the past 2 years I have represented 27 counties across the northern half of

our State, the top part of the State there. I had the uncomfortable, unfortunate experience of having to run against another incumbent Member of Congress in that election. I did prevail. It has been a great privilege to represent half the State just these past 2 years.

While West Virginia is one of the smaller States in terms of population, its geography is vast. It takes 6 hours to drive from one end of my district to the other, so I have traveled thousands of miles, meeting wonderful, hard-working taxpayers in West Virginia. In fact, one of my favorite things to do is, when I am driving basically 6 hours from one end of my district to the other, is stop in every little town at the barber shops, thrift stores, general stores, and just say hi to folks.

I have found that most folks have actually never met their Congressman or have ever met any Congressman. I take great pleasure in just popping in, even unannounced, saying hi to folks, letting them know we are there and we are here to help. I consider it a great honor and privilege to be able to do that.

My wife, Dr. Grace Gonzalez Mooney, and I are proud to call West Virginia home. We are, in fact, West Virginians by choice. We chose to move there from another State, an intentional choice we made that we are very proud of, and we are certainly not leaving.

I am grateful my wife has supported me unwaveringly over the past decade and even before. This is tough on the family, this business, so I really thank my wife. We have shared many triumphs and challenges through those years.

On October 13, 2014, our bonus baby, we call her, our daughter Gabrielle—we call her Gabby—was born at Women and Children's Hospital in Charleston, West Virginia. She is now 10 years old, and she knows I will be home more next year. Being in Congress has meant missing a lot of time with family, but West Virginia has educational freedom, which is great, so we homeschooled our children, allowing us to spend more time together.

I have watched my children grow and thrive over the years. I am proud of my son, Lucas, a junior at Princeton. He is an expert in jujitsu. My daughter Cami, who is a gifted singer, is a freshman at Vanderbilt. I am excited to spend more time with them as I step away. I thank my three children for their love and support.

When I first arrived in Congress, one of my top priorities was addressing the opioid overdose crisis that was ravaging our State. The opioid epidemic is a tragedy that knows no bounds. It doesn't matter the color of your skin, if you live in a city or a rural area, if you are rich or poor, drug addiction is ravaging this country everywhere. I was proud that the first law I had changed was based on my bill called the PROP Act, Promoting Responsible Opioid Prescribing Act.

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This simple, yet important, piece of legislation simply sought to reduce unnecessary access to narcotic pain medications, thus lowering the risk of addiction.

I actually had a meeting with the West Virginia Medical Society my first term in Congress in Charleston, and they brought this to my attention. Doctors said that according to the newly passed Affordable Care Act there are provisions that allow the reimbursements to be reduced if patients complained that they didn't get the drugs they wanted. Studies have shown 70 percent of people addicted to drugs start with legally prescribed drugs.

Doctors are trying to do the right thing and not prescribe drugs to people who don't absolutely really need it. They don't want to cause more drug addiction, and for that they had to risk being penalized and not being reimbursed, have their reimbursements reduced.

They complained about this quite strongly to me, and I took action. I put in a bill to stop it. It was a bipartisan bill. We had 30 Republican cosponsors and 30 Democratic cosponsors. The Department of Health was dug in. They wouldn't acknowledge the problem. They wouldn't change it. They fought back against it. We had a hearing, and there was no opposition. Later that year the Department of Health just took the exact language of my bill. They agreed with me, and they took word for word the legal language of my bill and made it the new law of the Department of Health ensuring that doctors could never be penalized for not giving prescription drugs.

That was the first law I had changed, and I am proud of that.

I led support for the coal miners and families with the STREAM Act, Supporting Transparent Regulatory and Environmental Actions in Mining. The bill blocked anti-coal regulation from the Obama administration, preserving we estimate 77,000 good high-paying jobs in West Virginia and also across the Nation. The passage of the STREAM Act was crucial protecting our way of life in West Virginia.

Throughout my time in Congress, my colleagues know I fought for a term, what we call regular order in the appropriations process, actually passing the spending bills on time, reasserting the power of the purse that, again, the Constitution specifically and only puts in this Chamber right here, not in the Senate and not to the President.

The Constitution says that only this Chamber can initiate spending or taxation. That is something we have gotten away from doing. We pass these things called continuing resolutions where we give all the money to the President to do whatever he wants, and that is not right.

I firmly believe that the government works best when Congress uses its constitutional power of the purse to hold Federal agencies accountable. We don't

live in a bureaucracy in a bureaucratic-run government. We live in a democracy, a republic with democratic elections. It is crucial that we prioritize our districts and the needs of the American people rather than allowing bureaucrats to dictate policy behind closed doors and just give them the money.

Believe it or not, it almost sounds like living history, but when I was first elected, President Obama was in office, and it felt like our Nation was, frankly, losing their identity. I am convinced that President Trump's election in 2016 helped steer our country back on course. I stood behind President Trump through two politically motivated impeachment trials and against the partisan witch hunt of the January 6 Committee.

While I believe in robust political debate, the weaponization of government against President Trump was unprecedented, and many American people, as well, I am proud to have fought back. I am heartened by the support Trump and other conservatives continue to receive across this Nation.

As a member of the Financial Services Committee, I worked tirelessly to protect small businesses and to defend industries vital to our State: coal, oil, natural gas, and many others, financial services, banks, and even small banks that provide you loans you need to buy a home or start a small business. These people provide very important services.

People would stop and say: What are you going to get done? We have got a new Congress coming in.

We can get things done. It isn't easy. The political process isn't easy and simple, you have to fight for it, but we can get things done.

In 2017 and 2018, we worked to repeal some of the most harmful provisions of the Obama-era Dodd-Frank law. It was called the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act, signed into law by President Trump. It passed the House, and it passed the Senate with bipartisan support in the Senate. We had a coalition of some Democrats and most Republicans, but on May 24, 2018, that bill was signed into law.

Now West Virginia banks and banks across the country are not subject to many of the costly regulations that hurt economic growth.

This Congress, I fought against government overreach. I introduced an amendment to block the Federal Reserve from the digital dollar program, a move that would open the door to government control of our personal transactions similar to what you see in China. We have to defend our freedoms from government overreach.

During my entire time in public service, from the time I ran for State senate through today, I have been passionate about the right to protect all human life, including unborn babies. It has been a privilege to lead the Life and Conception Act which seeks to protect the most vulnerable among us, the unborn.

Following the Supreme Court's historic decision in *Dobbs*, States now have full authority to protect life from the moment of conception. My bill, the Life and Conception Act, is a biological fact. Joe Biden agrees with my bill. He said it last year that he believes life begins at conception. They used to teach this in school in biology classes across the country. In public schools they would teach that all human life begins at conception. That is just simply a fact. You can have different views on things, but it is a fact of life that life begins at conception. I am proud that most of my Republican colleagues have supported my legislation, and urge folks to continue to fight for all human life as we go forward.

I have a few closing comments and folks I want to thank, but I do want to yield to some of my colleagues who are here in the Chamber to reflect, and I appreciate them being here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH).

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for yielding.

I am pleased to be here to today to say a few things about my friend, and I will say the nice ones. I am teasing. They are all nice.

I do appreciate having that opportunity. I was listening to the gentleman's comments and was very moved because I think that people sometimes don't realize what Congressmen go through. We volunteered to do this job, so I know you are not complaining, and I am not complaining. The fact that you choked up a little bit when you started talking about your family, it meant a lot to me. I know it means a lot to you because we have had numerous conversations in your decade here. We have done a lot of things together, and you are always talking about your kids, what is going on and how they are doing.

I have even given you rides home or part of the way home. For those watching, I would drop him off at the McDonald's in Front Royal and someone would pick him up from West Virginia, but I would at least get him that far.

Our districts came close to touching, but we never actually did touch. It also gave me an opportunity on one occasion to travel with ALEX throughout the district.

He said that he likes to stop in the barber shops and the little stores. We did that one day. Specifically I remember stopping in that little pizza shop. I still can't pronounce the name of the town. I think it is Ghent. I might have it wrong, but it is not spelled that way.

We did have a little bit a schedule, and he was wanting to talk to more and more people, and every now and again I would have to say: All right, ALEX, we don't have time to talk to everybody.

That is just the way ALEX is. He is a great individual.

You talked about, and I have to concur, having had numerous philosophical conversations with you, that

you have been one of the strongest conservative voices during your time in the House.

I was talking with another Member, and ALEX happened to be present, and we were talking about things. He made some point on what we needed to do to push the conservative cause forward to make America great and better as we move forward.

The other guy said: Yeah, it is what we are going to miss. We will miss that, ALEX.

That is because we would be sitting trying to figure out how complicated it was and how you would maneuver this and that, and ALEX would say: No. Here is what you do. You just go straight-forward and tell people the facts.

That is what you have always done, and it has been greatly appreciated.

Last, but not least, through those 10 years we have developed a friendship, and that is a friendship that will be a lifetime friendship. We will continue to do things together, as I know that you have a servant's heart and will continue to want to serve the people of West Virginia. The people you represent in West Virginia are not that different from the people that I represent in southwest Virginia. It is not West Virginia, but southwest Virginia. Of course, as you know, I believe the two States should never have been cleaved apart because, particularly, in western portions of Virginia, we are very much culturally, spiritually, and politically aligned.

I appreciate you, and I look forward to working with you in whatever capacity you serve in next.

Mr. MOONEY. I appreciate your friendship over the years, Mr. GRIFFITH. I will certainly miss my colleagues. I will come back and visit. It is not that far away. I appreciate you taking some time. I know you are getting home to your family.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my other colleague from Virginia, Congressman BOB GOOD, who, like me, is going to head to private life at least some period of time on January 3 of next year.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOOD), who is also from Virginia.

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, Mr. ALEX MOONEY; and my other good friend, MORGAN GRIFFITH, from Virginia. These were two of the guys who helped me with some of the logistics and things that you need to know when you come to Congress. I appreciate the investment you made in me.

I am from central Virginia, so our districts don't touch, but ALEX MOONEY came to my district when very few wanted to when I had defeated an establishment incumbent, moderate RINO, shall we say, for the nomination in the summer of 2020. I was being outspent nearly 10 to 1 in the general. Not many people were coming to my district and helping me out.

While we are border States, it is a good 5 hours or so for you to get to my

district, and you showed up. You helped me with an event. You helped me more than only one other Member of Congress with fundraising and financial support. You directed many of your supporters to help me during a time when I really needed that.

I certainly also consider you a life-long friend. As someone who was never in danger of going to an Ivy League school, you are one of the few Ivy League conservatives whom I know from your time at Dartmouth.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Are there others?

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. I am stretching to think of others, but I think of one who just got nominated for Defense Secretary. He is an Ivy Leaguer. I don't know him personally.

However, the job you have done in your family, to have your son come behind you who is a conservative leader at Princeton, to have your daughter who is a freshman at an Ivy League-like SEC school in Vanderbilt shows the example that you have had for your children and the way your children have wanted to be involved in what you are doing here. I have met them on several occasions along with your lovely wife.

Thank you for standing on principle. When I came to Congress 4 years ago with the life issue being one of the most important, if not the most important issue, to me, to know when I got here that you were the sponsor of the Life and Conception Act, and I was quick to sign on and let you know I wanted to be a cosigner of that and to stand alongside you. The issue that is the ultimate issue, it is literally life and death, it is the number one killer in this country.

I often refer to what happened 2½ years ago with the *Dobbs* decision politically in this body is the great departure as some in our Conference and in our party don't want to talk about the issue now that the responsibility or opportunity is there for us to lead on this issue. I thank you that you have led on that issue.

You have never been one of the guys who is the loudest voice in the room and who is doing all the talking. A lot of people in this body and in this Chamber like the sound of their own voice. When you do take the mike, you always were strong, compassionate, and effective in making your case in what you were trying to persuade the rest of us to do. I have admired that.

I admired your courage where you could have stayed in this seat for as long as you wanted to. One of the great problems here in this body is it is full of people whose goal is just to be here so they can stay here. They can be here for as long as they can be here, hopefully to die here, I guess, is what so many of their priority is, while you risked a very safe seat and gave it up to run statewide.

While many of us supported you, as my colleague from Virginia just spoke about, Mr. GRIFFITH, we fell short of that objective. We can only hope that

the person who was elected to that Senate seat in West Virginia will give them the conservative representation they deserve and that you would have given them if you had prevailed in that race.

I thank you for the example you set, I thank you for your friendship to me, and thank you for how you represented West Virginia. You have been a passionate and unashamed conservative. It has been a privilege to serve alongside you.

Mr. MOONEY. My good friend from California on the other side of the coast, a lot of similar issues, and I have gotten to know this Congressman for a long time since I have been here. There were many social gatherings and things. I am going to miss the relationships with my friends, but I thank Congressman DOUG LAMALFA for sticking around to say a few words.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am here with mixed feelings here.

Of course, I want to be here to honor ALEX, but I am sorry we have to.

I can echo a lot of the words our colleagues have said here too for your standing up and being forthright, and the reason you wanted to take a bold step to be able to represent the people in the entire State of West Virginia.

You have done, as the map shows, one-half of the State already, which is pretty amazing. I come from California where I represent one-fifty-second, for those who are keeping score.

I really value your friendship. You have been one of my best friends in my legislative years. I appreciate that a lot.

Our good pal, Tony Strickland, from southern California is the one who put us together here.

I have known Tony ever since I first ran in the State legislature many years ago. He said: You have to check out ALEX, he is great.

He was absolutely right. You have been a strong voice as a patriot for our basic freedoms. You have always done it with a sense of humor and a good flair that people want to be around you. They want to be a part of what you are doing.

Tony is proud of you down there in SoCal. I am proud of you as a friend. It is like what Tony is doing as a beacon of light and freedom in that place, here you fought for that in West Virginia, and I do have to kind of look at some the parallels we have with northern California.

West Virginia decided back around the Civil War that they wanted to break away because they didn't agree with a whole lot of what was going on in all of Virginia. We have a whole bunch of us in northern California who want to break away with the rest of the State because we don't agree with a whole lot going on in the urban part of California either. We have a common bond there with that spirit.

I enjoy your State. I enjoy the visits I have been able to make there. I want

to be able to continue to do more with you as we go on, whether it is business or the fun stuff with some of the professional cage fighting we have enjoyed together a few times there, too.

Of course, getting to know your son a little bit, it has been fun along the way. You have a great legacy coming in behind you.

With that, I don't want to go on and on or maybe get this to be too emotional or something, but I appreciate you, ALEX. You are a good man, and I know there is a lot more for you in the future here, for you to be able to continue to give, to help strengthen our country, to strengthen your State and our people.

God bless you. You are a dear friend. I appreciate you. Best wishes and God's blessings on your travels.

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Mr. MOONEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I didn't plan the hour out. I just came to the floor to say good-bye and mention a few of my colleagues. If you want to stick around to say something, please do. I appreciate you three sticking around. There may be one yet to come.

One thing I am going to miss is my colleagues. There are a lot of frustrations in this job, but it is still an honor to do it.

I would say to my colleagues that we have friends on both sides of the aisle. We all do. It is not as partisan a place as people think, and I would say a bipartisan comment: Most of us come down here wanting to help our country and make it a better place and to fight for what we believe in.

People often ask: Why do you do this kind of thing? Why do you run for Congress? What is your motivation?

They don't really understand that. I think sometimes they think it is all about power and other things, but it is really to serve your faith.

I know, along with my colleagues here, we run to serve our faith. I am a practicing Roman Catholic. That is important to me. I also know that my faith demanded involvement in the public policy process, and that is why we run.

I am glad that the gentleman who I endorsed early on, Riley Moore, who is taking my seat, shares the same values. The new Governor of West Virginia, Patrick Morrisey, is a good friend, and I think he is going to do great things for our State. The process goes on, and people come in.

The values you are raised with are important. I am blessed to be the middle of three boys.

I have an older brother, Vincent, who is a college professor. He has been a great role model for me growing up in many ways, including faith and family. He is a lot smarter than me. He got his Ph.D. and teaches electrical engineering. I didn't have the gift of that, but he has been a great role model.

I have a younger brother by 1 year named Pat, and we shared a room

growing up as kids. He has always been helping me in every way he can.

I don't know how people do this without family, to be honest with you.

My baby sister—I say the middle of three boys, but we have the youngest, who is the fourth, my little sister, Margarita, who is always praying for me and helping me in every way she can.

I know there is so much love and support from my siblings. That matters a lot, and I thank them for standing with me as really the only politician in the family, other than my uncle, who was the mayor of Miami, and my cousin, who is the mayor of Miami. That is Miami. That is the Suarez part, my mother's side. In my immediate family, I am the one who all the family surrounded to help.

My father was taken home a little early in 2001 at the age of 57. He had strokes and passed away, but my father was a feisty Irishman from New York, and he really believed in the political process.

He was actually the political one in the family, believe it or not. He was always talking politics around the kitchen table. He was the oldest of seven children, and, as far as I know, the only Republican in the whole family, an Irish Catholic family from New York.

He accepted the calling to go to Vietnam and serve in the Army. He was a captain. Thankfully, he came home alive because I was born 1 year later, in 1971. My older brother, Vincent, was born while my father was in Vietnam.

My dad literally fought the advance of Communism in Vietnam. He was proud of his service. He thought it was the right thing to do.

My mother's story is different but similar in a way. My mother, who is 83 years old, still lives with me. When she was 20, her country was taken over by Communists. She was sitting in Cuba with a pretty nice life on a farm. She is the fourth of 14 children.

One day, the Castro militia, the Communist militia and their thugs, came kicking in the doors at my mother's house and put my mother and my "abuelito," "grandfather," in jail, and anyone over the age of 16 went to jail.

My mother spent 7 weeks in a Communist prison in Cuba because she wasn't supporting the revolution of Castro and the Communist regime. She had a free place to come to, a place where you can live in freedom, which is what we all fight for here, at least some of us.

Being raised by a mother who, at age 20, lost her country—and still to this day, by the way, if you look at Cuba, it is still an oppressed Communist country. What the Communists take, they don't give back. To this day, we are waiting for Cuba to become free.

My mother saw what government can do, how evil government can be to you. My father fought these people in Vietnam.

People say, why are you so into politics? I guess my mom and dad really

valued that, really instilled in me that it was an honorable thing to do, to serve your country. If good people don't do it, guess what? The bad guys are going to do it. You really don't have a choice.

At least vote—I know some people don't even vote, but at least vote. That is just the minimum level.

I accepted the calling.

I thank my mother for her support over the years, not in only raising me but standing with me and always supporting me. She lives just a couple of miles away from me in West Virginia right now. She is 83 years old.

I think most politicians—really, not most. I will tell you every politician wishes they had a mother like mine. She goes to every event she can go to. She is always promoting me.

She even wrote a book called “Leaving Cuba: One Family’s Journey to Freedom.” She enjoys giving speeches about that. Still to this day, she runs around and gives speeches about it. My mom lives for her four children.

Thank you, Mom, for everything.

Well, last but not least, I would be remiss if I didn't at least thank one gentleman on my staff who has been with me for 8 years, my chief of staff, Michael Hough. He did leave earlier this year because I am leaving, but Mike has been with me through thick and thin, ups and downs, witch hunts, and successes. He was with me when I was a State senator.

Thank you, Mike, for everything you have done. Mike is one of my best friends and will continue to be a best friend.

He is not here to say anything about me yet, and I know he would be if he could, but my longest colleague, ANDY HARRIS, I am going to miss him. I am going to miss you all, but ANDY has been a good friend for a long time. He is sticking around.

As I close this chapter in my life, first and foremost, the constituents who elected me five times, thank you. I have fought hard. I have kept my word.

One of my mentors here, JIM JORDAN, just wrote a book. It was simply titled “Do What You Said You Would Do.” That is the name of the book. You don't even have to read the book. “Do what you said you would do,” it is right there if you would just do that.

People will say, what are you going to do when you get to Congress? Look at what I said when I was running for Congress over here, and then don't be surprised when I vote that way right here. That is what I am going to do. I am going to do what I said I would do, and I have done that.

To my constituents, thank you for the 10 years. I have done what I said I would do to the very best of my ability every time. We don't always agree. Not everybody agrees with their own family. No one is going to agree with every vote, but I voted my conscience. I have done the best I could. I thank you for the opportunity to do that.

To all of my staff, it has been the honor of a lifetime.

While I am leaving the House of Representatives, I am not leaving public service. I look forward to continuing to serve the people of West Virginia in whatever capacity in which I am called in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Ms. BUSH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. BUSH. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to deliver my farewell address, but first, I would like to give some time to my colleagues to deliver some remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOWMAN).

Mr. BOWMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my sister CORI BUSH for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start by sending peace and love to this Chamber, peace and love to the American people, and, most importantly, peace and love to my family and to the incredible people of New York-16.

I have to send a special shout-out to my lovely wife, Melissa Oppenheimer Bowman. Thank you for supporting me, loving me, and putting up with me over the last 4 years. Thank you for taking care of our beautiful children back home, Jelani, Marcel, and Maya.

It is hard for someone to be working class in this Chamber, and I know every time I came to Washington, you became a single mom, getting up very early in the morning, getting our kids ready for school, dropping them off at the bus stop, and then going to serve the people of the Bronx as a third grade teacher.

You would teach all day, get off of work, pick our kids up from school, bring them home, start cooking dinner, help them with their homework, plan your lessons for the next day for your kids, and then put our kids to bed.

Then, when I was here trying to do the job of the district and when I didn't go straight home after work, you made sure I heard about it. When I didn't call you when I got back home, you made sure I heard about that, too.

I love you. Thank you, Melissa, for all you have done.

I also thank my constituents, each of them, for trusting me to be their voice and allowing me to fight for them every single day in Congress.

Though I will be leaving Congress formally, I plan to continue to fight for the people in New York-16, particularly in the areas of Port Chester, Greenburgh, Yonkers, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, and, of course, the Bronx.

If it weren't for the people in these particular communities, especially the Bronx, where I served as an educator

for 17 of the 20 years of my career, I would not have been prepared to come to Congress and serve the people.

Of course, I need to thank my team, both in New York and here in D.C., who worked every single day to do everything in their power to meet the needs of the people of New York-16.

Our case closure was exemplary. We brought tens of millions of dollars back to the district, and we did everything in our power to deal with the issues of affordability, gun violence, education, and so many other issues. I thank my staff and my team so much, and I thank them for their service.

In 2020, I became the first African American elected in the 16th District of New York in U.S. history. When I was running, I didn't even know that stat, which is pretty interesting.

As such, I stand on the shoulders of the giants who have come before me. My ancestors fought and died for me to have the opportunity to be here, and I am humbled by the immense honor and responsibility.

My ancestors built this place and built the strongest economy in the world as enslaved Africans in this country, and though we didn't pass any legislation related to reparations, we will continue to fight for reparations for Black people in this country.

I cannot go further without giving honor to my late mother, Ms. Pauline Bowman. My mother raised me and my three sisters alone. She was a civil servant in the post office for 33 years. She worked 6 days, sometimes 7 days a week and all the overtime she could muster to make sure that I was the first person in our family to go to college.

When I was very young, she told me—and I remember this story very clearly. We were coloring in a coloring book at the dining room table, and I could not color in between the lines. She could, and I thought it was like magic that she could.

I started crying. I was pretty upset. My mother looked me in the eye and told me I can be whatever I wanted to be.

It was that love and that confidence that she instilled in me that guided me and propelled me to win a historic election. She got to see me run. She got to see me win. She got to see me on her favorite news programs, CNN and MSNBC.

I would like to think that I made her proud before my sisters and I lost her to COVID on Valentine's Day in 2021.

Mom, Pauline Bowman, I love you. I thank you, and please continue to guide and watch over me.

It is a challenging world we live in, and I want to be the best example for my children and the people who I will continue to serve outside of this Chamber.

Mom, I love you. I always will love you. This place is better because of you and because of what you raised me to be.

Prior to being elected to Congress, I worked in education for 20 years as a