

which has benefited my industrial and manufacturing district so very much.

I am most proud, I think, of having put the greater Lehigh Valley on the radar of folks here in D.C. because Pennsylvania is not just Pittsburgh or Philadelphia, although some would say it comes down to the Eagles and the Steelers. We in the greater Lehigh Valley are the third largest region in Pennsylvania and the fastest growing region in Pennsylvania. I am proud to say that my team and I did just that: We put Pennsylvania-Seven on the radar of people here in D.C.

I am proud to have had huge returns for the greater Lehigh Valley during the past 6 years. The bipartisan infrastructure law alone brought \$395 million to my community. Our local airport has constructed a whole new TSA terminal. It was the first completed project under the bipartisan infrastructure law.

I was able to bring \$50 million over the past 6 years in community project funding, ranging from funding for food pantries and grocery deserts, Head Start, wastewater treatment plants, bridges long in disrepair, and all kinds of things. There have also been countless thousands of dollars returned to the people of Pennsylvania-Seven through the work of my district office team.

There is a lot to be worked on in the future, and I hope that Congress will work on the issue of childcare. It is such an important issue. We must do something about childcare, and I hope that universal pre-K will be part of our future.

Most of all, we need to work on campaign finance reform—please. This past election, in my district alone, the race cost a total of \$38 million for one congressional race. That is obscene. It wasn't even the most expensive in the country. It was the 10th most expensive in the country. Imagine that, and imagine all the good that could be done with that.

□ 1100

All of this work doesn't happen because of one elected official. It is the team that you have behind you. My wonderful, caring, intelligent team that never forgot that our mission was to serve the wonderful people of Pennsylvania-Seven, I thank them.

To the voters of Pennsylvania-Seven, I thank them for the greatest privilege and honor of my life in representing you.

Finally, my amazing kids, Clay and Adrienne. They are my rocks, the center of my universe. I am so glad they were here by my side for this incredible journey, and I could not have done it without them. I love them. Then there's my sidekick, Zoey, the Congress dog.

Mr. Speaker, I will miss this place.

HONORING MAYOR MARVIN JOHNSON

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor one of the longest-serving mayors in the Nation, Marvin Johnson, as he retires after 45 years of leading the city of Independence in Minnesota.

Marvin was actually my inspiration to run for office. When my wife, Jacquie, and I were starting out, our city public works department marked 400-year-old trees on our property, two oaks and two maples, and they were to come out the next day for a new road.

I called Marvin. He showed up at my house at 10 o'clock at night. He looked at the trees, he looked at the road, and he took out his "brick phone" that some of us remember from 30 years ago, and he called the public works director. He said, Danny, move the road 50 feet, we are not going to take these trees.

Since that time, I have never seen a government official as effective as Marvin. His council meetings were models of efficiency and respect, even as I rocked my newborn children in their car seats under the table during late-night evening sessions.

He is a true public servant and has been an outstanding mentor and friend over the years. As his career in public service comes to an end and he looks ahead to his 90th birthday this spring, we wish him all the best in whatever comes next. I thank him for his support over the years and his leadership on behalf of the city of Independence.

REMEMBERING MINNESOTA STATE REPRESENTATIVE DICK BORRELL

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Minnesota State Representative Dick Borrell who passed away suddenly earlier this year.

Dick was not just a loving family man, but also a successful businessman and a true patriot. Raised in Waverly, Minnesota, he went on to serve our Nation in the Marine Corps and earned his degree from Minnesota State, Mankato.

Dick had a Midas touch when it came to business. Everything he touched seemed to turn to gold. He ran his business for over 20 years and was often found working overtime or on weekends shoulder-to-shoulder on the production lines with his employees. In fact, Dick was at his warehouse working just 3 days before he passed away.

When not at work, Dick loved flying and sharing countless adventures with his wife, Patty, usually from their backyard runway, which he used for his plane. He even spent time flying around the State with me during my campaign for Governor, which I will never forget.

Dick was passionate about politics and preceded me in the Minnesota House of Representatives. He was an active member of the Wright County Republicans and was never shy about

sharing his thoughts about what is coming out of Washington.

He was a leader in our community. Dick Borrell touched the lives of thousands in Minnesota. To his wife, Patty, and the rest of the Borrell family, we offer our most sincere condolences, and we will always remember our friend, Dick, and a life well-lived.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSMAN DEAN PHILLIPS

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge my Minnesota congressional colleague, Congressman DEAN PHILLIPS, as he concludes his service in the House of Representatives.

Outside of Congress, DEAN has proven to be a shrewd businessman, owning and starting several successful companies, and helping run his family's business.

During his tenure here in Washington, DEAN worked across the aisle with the same tenacity to help Minnesotans. From ensuring small businesses received the financial flexibility they needed during COVID to working with all of us in the Minnesota delegation to strengthen the Department of Veterans Affairs for our veterans, we found ways to put our political differences aside and get results for our constituents.

As we saw over the last year, DEAN is never afraid to pursue common ground for the common good and fight to restore Americans' faith in our institutions, regardless of the political ramifications.

I thank DEAN for his service. We wish him all the best in his next chapter.

HONORING RALPH RONALD GRIFFIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WENSTRUP). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Brigadier General Ralph Ronald Griffin, known as Ronnie back home.

Ronnie's life of dedication, military service, and leadership has left a mark on both our country and eastern North Carolina.

He began his military career by enlisting in the United States Marine Corps. Ronnie later received his commission from the North Carolina Military Academy and rose up the ranks, eventually pinning on the rank of brigadier general. He spent over 38 years in a military uniform.

His career took him to Vietnam, not once, but twice. Ronnie was inducted into the North Carolina Military Academy Hall of Fame, and he was awarded our State's high honor of The Order of the Long Leaf Pine by Governor Hunt and Governor Easley for his exceptional contributions to our State.

Beyond his military service, Ronnie loved his family. He stood at his late wife, Annalee's, side. I will never forget our conversation. He shared with me how her passing was difficult for him.

Ronnie loved his children, and he especially loved his grandchildren.

Serving in the military, he developed lifelong friends. Ronnie had many friends that served with him, and one in particular was Mike, who was more like a brother. They shared so many stories and laughed together, even their children call each other uncle. It was Uncle Mike and General Uncle Ronnie.

Mr. Speaker, Ronnie was a humble person, and he came from humble beginnings. He was driven by faith and his deep love for our country. We owe a great deal of gratitude and respect to Brigadier General Ronnie Griffin and his family.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to honor a true American hero and one that I just so happen to call my friend, Ronnie. God speed.

ALWAYS ON WATCH

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, my community lost three brave Palm Beach County Sheriff's Deputies in a very tragic crash: Deputy Ignacio "Dan" Diaz, Deputy Ralph "Butch" Waller, and Corporal Luis Paez.

I did know these men. I can't pretend that I knew them well, but we shared a handshake at various Veterans Days parades throughout the years, nods as we were in the same motorcade routes, and camaraderie as we fired up our Harleys and hit the road on motorcycle runs during times like the holidays, just like now.

These men, they were always present. They were always on watch because it was their calling to protect every person in our community from danger, whether they knew them well or not. They knew the hazards of their chosen profession. All day, every day, they patrolled inches away from death.

Yet, these men, they never hesitated. They never stepped aside and asked somebody else to face the danger. Each day, they woke up, they put on their badge, their body armor, they holstered their pistols, they left their families, and they went to work.

Courage for them was as natural as breathing. Plain and simple, they were warriors, strong, selfless, committed to protecting others. We thank God for these men. We thank God for their families who shared these patriots with us each and every day, and we thank God for their dedication to duty, which was a beacon of selflessness.

I ask that my colleagues rise and join me in a moment of silence to honor these brave men for their sacrifice. I would ask that the gallery rise as well since they are here listening and let us honor these deputies in a moment of silence. I ask that my colleagues rise to honor these deputies in a moment of silence.

IN SUPPORT OF FEDERAL WORKERS

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

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of more than 2.3 million dedicated civil servants that make up our Federal workforce, including nearly 30,000 Federal employees who work in my own congressional district.

As a former union president of Iron Workers Local 7, I am also proud to stand in solidarity with the American Federation of Government Employees, the National Treasury Employees Union, our postal employee unions, and over 30 other labor organizations that tirelessly advocate for fair wages, safe working conditions, and quality healthcare and pensions for our Federal workers.

With less than 40 days until the Presidential Inauguration, the new Trump administration has already announced its intent to target and scapegoat Federal employees, all in the name of cost reduction while at the same time extending trillions of dollars in tax cuts for the richest Americans.

This reflects a blatant disregard for the sacrifices made by Federal workers at the VA and elsewhere and the critical services that they deliver to the American people.

According to President-elect Trump, America's Federal workforce is full of: deep-state rogue bureaucrats, crooked and dishonest people who are destroying this country and who are going to be held accountable.

To this end, he is seeking to revive schedule F, a punitive employment classification that will strip career Federal employees of their due process rights and other statutory civil service protections. This new category would also pave the way for the administration to fire these nonpartisan workers at will and replace them with political loyalists.

President-elect Trump has also recently announced the creation of a so-called Department on Government Efficiency, or DOGE, Commission, an unofficial advisory panel that would purportedly serve to dismantle the government bureaucracy.

The co-chairs of this alleged department are two billionaires, Elon Musk, and Vivek Ramaswamy, who have vowed to conduct mass layoffs and employee relocations in order to reduce the size of Federal Government. As they tell it, most Federal employees don't even show up to work anyway.

These unwarranted attacks against our Federal workforce only serve to perpetuate false narratives that greatly undermine the value of public service and undermine the morale and ability of Federal employees to deliver essential services to the American people.

As former chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Operations

and the Federal Workforce, I can attest that these Federal workers are not rogue bureaucrats or deep-state actors. Rather, many, many of them are patriotic military veterans.

In fact, our Federal workforce consists of nearly 650,000 U.S. armed service veterans, or more than 30 percent of all Federal employees. In fact, the vast majority of Federal employees work in service to care for 18 million veterans and their families who are served and cared for by the Department of Veterans Affairs, which employees nearly 490,000 doctors, nurses, medical staff, social workers, and other healthcare professionals, caring for our Nation's veterans.

□ 1115

Our Federal workforce also consistently shows up to work, even during national emergencies, as reported by the Partnership for Public Service. Frontline Federal employees are deployed in the field nationwide as Border Patrol agents, food inspectors, postal workers, TSA officers, forest firefighters, FEMA disaster response personnel, clinical biologists, and other jobs that support public safety in times of crisis.

According to the Office of Personnel Management, only 15 percent of Federal workers actually live in the D.C. area with 85 percent of Federal workers stationed in communities across our Nation.

In stark contrast to President-elect Trump and his billionaire DOGE co-chairs, Federal employees are not looking to get rich. The Federal Salary Council reports that in 2024, Federal workers earned nearly 25 percent less on average than their private sector counterparts. Recent strikes by the autoworkers, UPS Teamsters, Kaiser healthcare personnel, and other private sector workers have resulted in historic and well-deserved wage increases, in some cases more than 20 percent.

Meanwhile, to ensure the continuity of government services, Federal workers are expressly prohibited by statute from participating in a strike. They must stay on the job. Asserting the right to strike and even belonging to a union that asserts the right to strike against the Federal Government is a violation and a felony and punishable by imprisonment. In the interest of public safety, frontline Federal employees also stay on the job without pay for the duration of every government shutdown.

Nevertheless, every Federal worker proudly takes an oath of office that reflects their commitment to our Nation, to public service, and dedication to carrying out their agency mission on behalf of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, sadly, Elon Musk has even resorted to publicly naming Federal employees who he would like to fire on social media. Our Federal workforce deserves better. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in strong support of America's