

We can begin to make flood insurance actuarially sound. We shouldn't pretend that we can make incremental changes to a system that is fundamentally bankrupt. We should accept those losses and start over.

There must be stronger financial disincentives for people who refuse to do their jobs, and not just for individuals. State and local governments, with their land use planning, zoning, and building codes, should bear more of the financial burden in changing our policies to be sustainable financially, not the general taxpayer.

For people at risk, this is not unduly harsh. It is the reality in a world that is changing dramatically because of climate change. We do not do people any favors by ignoring the reality, subsidizing reckless behavior, and putting more people and property at risk. This does involve some short-term pain but will avoid long-term financial disaster and human catastrophe.

COMMENDING YASMEEN BANKOLE

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

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Yasmeen Bankole, who is here with us today with her mother, Victoria, in the gallery.

Yasmeen is a public servant who always shows up for her neighbors in Illinois District Three. Yasmeen is a longtime resident of Hanover Park, calling it home for over 20 years. At the age of 27, Ms. Bankole's commitment to her community pushed her to serve as the village trustee of Hanover Park, becoming the first and only Nigerian American elected official in Illinois.

As a founding member of Black Women Who Lead, Yasmeen empowers and supports Illinois Black women to succeed in elected and leadership roles.

Ms. Bankole also serves in Illinois District Three and the surrounding region in Illinois as the regional director for U.S. Senator DICK DURBIN and as the economic development chair of the NAACP DuPage County Branch.

Yasmeen brightens every room she walks into, and she inspires others.

Today, on behalf of Illinois District Three, it is my honor to present Yasmeen with a commendation for her contributions to our community and for her commitment to public service, equity, and justice.

I congratulate Yasmeen.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL CHILDRESS

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Madam Speaker, I also rise in commendation of Michael Childress, a leader dedicated to our multicultural, multiracial democracy.

A longtime resident of DuPage County, Mr. Childress is the first-ever Black member of the DuPage County Board, where he serves as vice chair and represents families from Bloomingdale, Bensenville, Addison, and Wood Dale.

Michael also serves as the president of the DuPage County Branch of the

NAACP. Under his leadership, the organization has assisted Black-owned businesses and entrepreneurs in our community, expanded voter participation, and offered mentorship opportunities to involve youth of diverse backgrounds in leadership and our democracy.

Mr. Childress also spearheads efforts to combat domestic violence, serving on the board of directors of one of the largest domestic violence advocacy agencies in Chicago, Family Rescue.

Therefore, for his contributions to Illinois District Three, our youth, and our multicultural democracy, I am honored to recognize Michael Childress.

THANKING DARA MUNSON

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Dara Munson.

Dara is a nonprofit leader who has provided constituents with lifesaving services and opportunities to thrive for more than 25 years.

Native to Detroit, Ms. Munson moved to Chicago when she became the CEO of the Chicago Child Care Center. Under her leadership, the organization became one with Family Focus, expanding services for over 20,000 children and families.

As the president and CEO of Family Focus, she also serves families in my district as the vice chair of the International Women's Forum and the founding member of the Early Childhood Education CEO Roundtable.

In her own words, it is her goal to see families receive equitable support and resources so they may realize their dreams and the dreams of their ancestors.

In the name of my constituents, it is my great honor to thank and recognize Dara for her contributions.

COMMENDING EMANUEL CHRIS WELCH

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise in commendation to the Honorable one and only Speaker Emmanuel Chris Welch for his historic and inspirational service to the families of Illinois.

Speaker Welch, a dear colleague and a fierce advocate of racial equity, serves as the first-ever Black speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives.

Speaker Welch has led historic legislation to provide immigrants, independently of legal status, access to driver's licenses; combat homelessness in our State; and create an elected school board for Chicago.

I was honored to serve as assistant speaker of the house as part of his leadership team, where we were able to approve a ban on assault weapons, invest in green jobs, and reform our criminal justice system.

We thank Speaker Welch for his brave leadership and unwavering commitment to advancing equity, inclusion, justice, and dignity for all Illinoisans.

HONORING TONI PRECKWINKLE

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the Cook County Board president, Toni Preckwinkle.

From five terms as alderperson to becoming the first Black woman president of Cook County Board and overseeing the Nation's second most populous county, President Preckwinkle has proven her dedication to our communities.

President Preckwinkle believes, like I do, that healthcare is a human right. Under her leadership, Cook County has expanded healthcare to 600,000 residents of Cook County, regardless of citizenship status.

Her work also extends to the criminal justice system, advocating for policies to reduce incarceration.

I am honored to commend President Preckwinkle for her 30 years of public service and the impact she has had on my constituents.

HONORING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Black History Month as today marks the closing of that very important celebration in our community and across the Nation.

However, Black History Month is not just a month. It is every day of the year, and it must reaffirm unity in action.

During this month, we reflect on the significance of the shoulders we stand on, the shoulders of giants in Harlem such as the late, great Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and our former Congress Member, the Lion of Lenox Avenue, Charles B. Rangel.

This month and always, we must acknowledge the achievements of Black Americans throughout the Nation's history. That is why, Madam Speaker, I am proud to introduce the Holcombe Rucker Park Landmark Act. This is a noncontroversial measure that would honor the life and legacy of Holcombe Rucker, a World War II veteran, Harlem Junior High School teacher, family man, and graduate of City College in New York City. He dedicated his entire life to uplifting Harlem through compassion, books, and basketball.

My bill would ensure the preservation of Holcombe Rucker Park, considered by many across the country as the "Mecca of Basketball." Rucker Park has helped forge a path to multiple NBA stars, such as Wilt Chamberlain, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Kobe Bryant, "Tiny" Archibald, and the great Earl "The Pearl" Monroe.

This Federal recognition would also preserve the park's legacy and ensure that future generations can appreciate his role in shaping the cultural and sporting landscapes of our Nation.

Speaking of Federal recognition, we are also closing out Dominican Heritage Month. This week, I joined Dominican-American leaders and the diaspora to ring the closing bell at Nasdaq in honor of a day of importance, Dominican Independence Day, February 27,

and in recognition of Dominican economic contributions to the United States of America.

Dominicans have more than tripled in population since the 1990s to represent a population of a total of 2.4 million people in the United States, the fourth largest population of Latinos in these United States.

Our contribution to this great Nation grows even stronger every day.

Just 2 weeks ago, we also had Dominicans on the Hill, where thousands of Dominican Americans joined us here to bring forward their message for recovery for our Nation.

Madam Speaker, finally, we will hear a lot about the border this week. We must remember that the border solution lies not just on border safety. We recognize that there must be greater border safety, particularly at the points of entry, where most of the fentanyl comes through in trucks and other vehicles.

□ 1130

However, we must also make sure that we don't gut our asylum system. We need to make sure America continues to be a beacon of hope and an opportunity for people that are persecuted all over the world.

It must be a balanced approach with four underpinnings: one, of course, border security measures to make our southern border stronger; two, one that acknowledges the root causes of migration in the hemisphere; three, one that also acknowledges the economic needs of our Nation for immigrants, such as farmworkers and work permits; and, finally, sensible, comprehensive immigration reform for Dreamers, TPS recipients, and family reunification.

Madam Speaker, I finalize by saying that we do have a bipartisan piece of legislation supported by Republicans and Democrats. It is called the Dignity Act, and it has these four very important underpinnings: greater border security, an acknowledgement of the root causes of migration, the economics, and comprehensive immigration reform.

HONORING THREE AFRICAN-AMERICAN TRAILBLAZERS FROM OHIO'S NINTH DISTRICT

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today in observance of Black History Month to recognize three African-American trailblazers who called Ohio's Ninth District their home.

These Ohioans overcame systemic barriers, inspiring others to strive for equality and justice for all, and helped our region develop new horizons for the Nation. Their unwavering dedication to uplift their communities serves as a beacon of hope.

They remind us of the importance of celebrating "e pluribus unum," "out of many, one" that defines the valued

variants of a common humanity, the United States of America. There is no other Nation in the world like us.

By honoring the legacies of those who paved the way for progress, we remember these individuals for their historic firsts that broke down barriers for future generations; not just of Ohioans but for all of America.

Art Tatum's story is a testament to the power of music and the arts to lift the human spirit. Despite being visually impaired, he possessed an extraordinary gift for music that would propel him to legendary status in the world of jazz.

Born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1909, Tatum's journey began with a passion for the piano. Entirely self-taught by the age of 19, he was already making waves in the jazz world, captivating audiences with his unparalleled virtuosity.

His performance in venues across northwest Ohio attracted the attention of fellow musicians, and Tatum's playing style was characterized by its astonishing speed, precision, and complexity. His mastery of the piano pushed the boundaries of what was thought possible in technique and expression. The smallest perceptible time unit in music, which is called the tatum, is named after him to commemorate his achievement.

His influence extended far beyond the confines of jazz, shaping the very language of music itself in the character of our country. His name has become synonymous with excellence in jazz piano, and his impact on the genre continues to inspire future generations of musicians.

Linda Jefferson, her journey as a trailblazer in women's sports is not only remarkable, but also deeply intertwined with the history of northwest Ohio. Her early involvement in sports showcased her natural talent and dedication as well as her passion for competition.

However, it was her decision to join the Toledo Troopers, a professional women's football team, that propelled her into the spotlight. Responding to an advertisement in her hometown newspaper, the Toledo Blade, Linda seized the opportunity to become a part of something groundbreaking: professional women's football.

The Toledo Troopers, with Linda among their ranks, became dominant throughout the 1970s. Their unparalleled success not only brought glory to Toledo, but also shattered stereotypes about women in sports.

In 1975, Jefferson's exceptional achievements were honored when she graced the cover of womenSports magazine as Woman Athlete of the Year, a well-deserved recognition of her talent and dedication. Her legacy extends far beyond her accomplishments on the field, leaving an indelible mark on the history of Toledo and the world of women in sports as a whole.

Finally, Tony L. Bonner, his journey from his childhood in Sandusky, Ohio,

to a trailblazing figure in the city's civil service and as a community activist is remarkable.

Foreshadowing his commitment that would later extend to his local community, his decision to join the Air Force reflects his sense of duty and country over self.

Returning to Sandusky after his military service, Bonner became the city's first Black firefighter in 1971. In this role, he not only served his community in times of emergency but took on the responsibility of fostering diversity within the fire department as its recruitment coordinator.

Apart from his professional endeavor, he was deeply engaged in the social fabric of Sandusky as treasurer of the local NAACP, helping to advocate for marginalized communities.

In essence, Tony L. Bonner's contribution transcends the realm of firefighting and community activism, symbolizing a lifelong devotion to service, equality, and empowerment.

As Black History Month draws to a close, it is important to celebrate the path-breaking individuals who have made significant impacts on our communities from coast to coast. They faced discrimination and they rose above that. They made and built a better Nation.

Ohio's Ninth District proudly celebrates and acknowledges Mr. Tatum, Ms. Jefferson, and Mr. Bonner as historymakers for America who call our district home.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 36 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Holy God, You have set an awareness of eternity in our hearts that we would spend our days longing to be forever united with You. Hear, then our deep desire to appreciate what is beyond our human capacity to understand and to strive to live into Your perfect will. May we grasp that what we experience this day is but a speck in the vastness of Your eternity.

Teach us to number our days that we may live wisely and well. On this extra day, may the added wisdom we gain enrich our hearts and remind us to honor each moment You give us.