

walks of life. She guided the university through challenges with resilience and vision, always putting students first and keeping Iowa at the heart of every decision she made. President Wintersteen represents the very best of what a Cyclone can and should be.

Mr. Speaker, President Wintersteen's dedication to education and public service has inspired thousands across our state. Her legacy will endure in the classrooms she strengthened, the students she championed, and the future leaders she helped shape.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing President Wendy Wintersteen for her extraordinary contributions to higher education, agriculture, and the people of Iowa.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RANDY K. WEBER, SR.

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, due to a family illness, I missed the following votes. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 335; YEA on Roll Call No. 336; YEA on Roll Call No. 337; YEA on Roll Call No. 338; NAY on Roll Call No. 339; YEA on Roll Call No. 340; NAY on Roll Call No. 341; and YEA on Roll Call No. 342.

HEALTHCARE IS REAL

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the President and the Congressional Republicans have passed a bill, the Big Ugly Bill and signed into law on July 4, 2025 that would cut more than 1.5 trillion dollars toward investing in our families, children, and seniors' healthcare. In addition, purging 15 million Americans from insurance coverage, denying Medicaid and SNAP benefits for the poor and needy and diminishing funds to Medicare for the elderly, the disabled, and the disease individuals who desperately need support to live.

As Americans face a Republican-manufactured health care crisis, skyrocketing costs from Trump's tariffs and a weakening economy, Republicans have refused to extend the Affordable Care Act premium tax credits for working class families, which will expire December 31, 2025. I include in the RECORD a note from a constituent named Shemeka who captures how devastating the loss of the enhanced tax credits will be for her family.

"I am a single mother with a daughter who has just begun her freshman year of college.

Access to healthcare is absolutely essential to me and my family. I am a full-time employee in the inner city of Chicago where wages are modest, however employer-paid healthcare is not offered. Because of this, we rely on the Marketplace for affordable health coverage. Even with a budget focused solely on basic necessities, we are still struggling to maintain affordable healthcare. The current federal tax credits are what make it possible for us to have even the most basic health insurance, and additional credits are truly needed.

Without these federal tax credits, we would be placed in an extremely vulnerable position. Accessing affordable healthcare would become almost impossible, and the stability of our lives would be at serious risk. These tax credits are not just helpful they are essential. It is unimaginable to consider life without them.

"Thank you again for your leadership and for allowing me the opportunity to lift my voice on this critical issue."

SUPPORTING THE WAR POWERS RESOLUTIONS

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, prior to the Trump Administration, the United States followed a policy of interdiction to combat drug trafficking in the Caribbean. Over the past decade, that approach led to a steady decline in Venezuela's role as a major drug transit route. It relied on stopping vessels, inspecting cargo, and arresting suspects where evidence existed. This Administration has shamefully abandoned that lawful and effective approach in favor of bombing boats and committing extrajudicial killings at sea. There is no operational reason for abandoning interdiction, which worked, respected the rule of law, and avoided the use of lethal force where arrest and prosecution were possible.

After decades of forever wars, the American people are sick and tired of being dragged into needless armed conflicts. Despite that, President Trump escalated his reckless campaign against Venezuela even further last night, pushing the Nation closer to a war the American people do not want.

For weeks, the Administration has carried out lethal strikes on small boats in Venezuelan waters, killing dozens of people without any authorization from Congress. These killings occurred without due process and without any explanation for why the vessels could not have been stopped, inspected, and the individuals on board arrested and prosecuted. Most disturbing of all, the Administration carried out a so-called "double-tap" strike, deliberately targeting wounded survivors after an initial attack. That conduct is indefensible and inconsistent with the rule of law and the values the United States claims to uphold.

The President is also asking the American people to accept a justification that does not withstand scrutiny. The Administration claims these killings are about stopping drugs, but there is no credible evidence that Venezuela is a significant source of fentanyl entering the United States. The fentanyl crisis is driven overwhelmingly by synthetic opioids manufactured elsewhere and smuggled through established land routes, not by small boats off the Venezuelan coast. And Trump's professed concern about drug trafficking rings hollow when he issued a pardon to the former president of Honduras after a U.S. jury convicted him of running a violent drug-trafficking conspiracy to move massive quantities of cocaine toward the United States. If Trump were serious about stopping drugs and not using counternarcotics as a pretext for military escalation and regime change, he would not be letting convicted traffickers walk free while eyeing Venezuela's vast oil resources.

To this day, the Administration has not provided Congress with a public legal justification for these killings, nor has it explained the legal authority it claims to rely on. Congress and the American people deserve to see the legal rationale for the use of lethal force carried out in their name.

History teaches that unlawful uses of force cannot be excused by secrecy or by claims of simply following orders. Responsibility does not vanish up and down the chain of command when the law is violated. As international tribunals have long made clear, including at Nuremberg, individuals are responsible for war crimes and unlawful killings even when acting under superior orders. That principle must apply here as well. A future Administration committed to the rule of law will have a responsibility to investigate these actions fully and hold accountable those responsible for unlawful killings carried out in the name of the United States.

The Constitution is clear: the power to authorize war belongs to Congress, and Congress alone. No President gets a blank check to wage war by decree. That is why today, I proudly voted for two War Powers resolutions to block further escalation and reassert Congress's constitutional authority. It is unfortunate that Democrats had to force these votes under the War Powers Resolution just to ensure Congress carries out its duties, despite Speaker Johnson's best efforts to keep them off the House floor and avoid accountability.

The American people do not want another needless war, and I refuse to let our service members be put in harm's way for an escalation that Congress never approved.

SUPPORTING OF H. CON. RES. 61 AND H. CON. RES. 64

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 61 and H. Con. Res. 64, War Powers resolutions that direct President Trump to remove the U.S. military from hostilities in the Caribbean and against Venezuela unless explicitly authorized by Congress.

Since September 2, 2025, the Trump administration has conducted 25 military strikes on vessels in the Western Hemisphere, which they state to be carrying narcotics. At least 95 people have been killed in these strikes. Not one of these strikes has been authorized by Congress and I have publicly called for them to cease because I believe them to be unlawful extrajudicial killings.

The footage of the strike on September 2, 2025, which I have viewed in a classified setting, is deeply alarming and calls into question the Trump administration's respect for the laws of armed conflict. I have called on Secretary Hegseth and Secretary Rubio to immediately release the strike video in its entirety, so that the American public understands what President Trump has ordered in the Caribbean without any authorization from Congress. Congress has a responsibility to fully investigate not only the September 2, 2025, strike but the Trump administration's entire operation in the Caribbean and should take testimony from Secretary Hegseth, U.S. Special Operations

Commander Admiral Frank Bradley, and retired U.S. Southern Commander Admiral Alvin Holsey.

Beyond these strikes, the Trump administration has spent months conducting a large-scale military buildup in the Caribbean but has completely failed to explain the rationale to Congress. A military posture that includes a carrier strike group is wildly disproportionate to the goal of prosecuting counter-narcotics missions. The financial costs of Operation Southern Spear are significant and will likely run into billions of dollars. Keeping a carrier strike group on station longer than planned will result in additional maintenance costs, as well as unforeseen accidents, as we just saw with the USS *Harry Truman's* high operational tempo while deployed in the Middle East. It is unfortunate that the Department of Defense has failed to provide the Appropriations Committee with a full account of operational costs in SOUTHCOM and a projection of what future costs may be incurred. Military units supporting Operation Southern Spear are incurring a different type of cost, lost time training for missions that they would have undertaken had they not been diverted to the President's unauthorized activities in SOUTHCOM.

President Trump has also made several public comments about the potential for U.S. military forces to be used to remove Nicolas Maduro from power in Venezuela. President Trump has even directed the seizure of oil tankers in the region to apply pressure in Venezuela. As a Member of Congress who voted against authorizing the disastrous Iraq War, I believe that a war to enact regime change in Venezuela would be a catastrophic decision. That is why these two war powers resolutions are so critically important.

President Trump and his administration are out of control. The Constitution grants Congress the power to declare war and authorize military action. Because Congress has not done so in this case, the military activities directed by President Trump in SOUTHCOM are unlawful. Congress must prevent President Trump from dragging the United States into another disastrous regime change war that the American people do not support.

It is time for every Member of Congress to go on record and stand with the Constitution instead of President Trump's executive overreach. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of these two war power resolutions.

RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF
DELANO, CALIFORNIA

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of Delano, California as it celebrates its 110th anniversary.

Incorporated in 1915, Delano was originally established as a railroad town, serving as a hub for hundreds of workers building the southern terminus of the Southern Pacific railroad. Over the years, Delano has been the site of several historically significant events, particularly during World War II. The Voice of America Delano even operated as a vital broadcasting facility, relaying news and information to VOA stations across the Pacific, including Hawaii, Okinawa, and the Philippines.

In more recent history, the Delano Municipal Airport gained distinction as the home of a squadron of Northrop P-61 Black Widow aircraft—twin-engine fighters that played a key role in defending the Pacific Coast during the war.

Today, Delano is best known for its thriving agricultural industry. The city is a major producer of grapes, oranges, almonds, pistachios, and cotton. Alongside its agricultural success, Delano has experienced steady commercial growth, attracting major businesses such as Wonderful Citrus, the company behind the widely popular Halos brand.

Delano is also a culturally rich and diverse community, shaped by generations of residents from around the world. Since the arrival of early settlers under the Homestead Act, Delano has welcomed people from Latin America, Asia, and Europe, each contributing to the city's distinct character and traditions.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my congressional colleagues to join me in celebrating Delano on its 110th anniversary, and to honor its rich history, diverse community, and the spirit of those who call it home.

RECOGNIZING BUCKINGHAM TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR PAUL CALDERAIO'S SERVICE

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend Mr. Paul Calderaio for his extraordinary dedication to public service and his lasting contributions to Buckingham Township in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Paul's commitment to service began early in his life while living in Florida. That dedication only deepened after he and his family made Buckingham Township their home. For more than three decades, Paul Calderaio has exemplified the very best of local civic leadership, devoting his time, energy, and experience to strengthening his community.

A resident of Buckingham Township since 1955, Paul and his wife have raised their four children in Bucks County, firmly rooting their family in the community he has worked so diligently to serve. His public service to the Township spans nearly 25 years, first as Township Auditor and later as a Township supervisor, roles in which he demonstrated integrity, responsibility, and a steadfast commitment to transparency and good governance.

Throughout his tenure, Paul was a strong advocate for open space preservation and played a key role in campaigning for a Township bond dedicated to protecting land for future generations. His leadership helped ensure that Buckingham Township balanced growth with preservation, safeguarding its rural character and quality of life.

The results of his dedication are clear and admirable. Under the leadership of officials like Paul Calderaio, Buckingham Township has been ranked the safest township in Pennsylvania for its size, maintains some of the lowest township tax rates in Bucks County, and has achieved an exceptional AAA bond rating. This is an honor shared by only seven townships in the entire Commonwealth. Addi-

tionally, more than 6,500 acres of open space has been preserved, and the Township is consistently recognized as one of the best places to live in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, these accomplishments do not happen by chance. They are the product of years of thoughtful leadership, careful use of public resources, and an unwavering commitment to the people of Buckingham Township. Paul's legacy is one of service, accountability, and community pride.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Paul Calderaio for his many years of service and to thank him for the positive and lasting impact he has had on Buckingham Township, Bucks County, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF SERGEANT FIRST CLASS ERIC REYES

HON. BLAKE D. MOORE

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Sergeant First Class Eric Reyes's exemplary and distinguished record of service to our country during his twenty years on active duty. A native of the Bronx, New York, he enlisted in the Army as an infantryman after graduating from high school in January 2005.

During his 20-year career, Eric has served at every level of leadership within the Army, leading our Nation's greatest resource, our sons and daughters. He has led teams through the platoon level on multiple combat tours and spent most of his career at the tactical level, specializing in combined arms maneuver and large-scale combat operations. He has deployed twice in support of the Global War on Terror and distinguished himself within the infantry community, earning his Master Combat Infantryman's Badge.

Eric led at every step within a platoon and below and had an outsized impact on the training and readiness of future generations. He has been an observer-controller certifying and participating in 16 combat training center rotations, ensuring 16 platoons achieved the highest levels of readiness to deploy and win in combat. He was also a drill sergeant for nearly three years, training all recruits that came through Fort Jackson, South Carolina, during his time. Most recently, he has served as the Senior Military Science Instructor at the University of Utah ROTC program within my district. He has spent the last three years as the senior military instructor for all tactics, overseeing over 400 officers within the ROTC program at the University of Utah.

Eric Reyes has had a lasting impact on our Nation, deploying to fight in her wars, leading our fine men and women in uniform, and training the next generation of warriors in our great Army, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Sergeant First Class Eric Reyes for his selfless dedication, unwavering leadership, and steadfast commitment to our country. He is retiring this December after 20 years of stalwart service to our great Nation. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to him, his wife, Sarah, and their children, Xavier, Maliena, Olivia, and Sophia, for their sacrifices and contributions to the strength and security of our country.