

HONORING DR. MICHAEL FRANK

HON. VICTORIA SPARTZ

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 19, 2025

Mrs. SPARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Michael Frank, an influential Professor and community leader in Anderson, Indiana. Since 2001, Dr. Frank has served the students at Anderson University in the Political Science department as Department Chair. Dr. Frank earned his B.A. in International Relations from Northern Illinois University, as well as his Ph.D. in Political Science from The University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. His studies greatly contributed to his expertise in Political Science education and lends to his research in political realignment, party history, and political inequality. Dr. Frank served as Chair of the Madison County Public Defender Board since 2009, where he ensures compliance with state guidelines for the county's public defenders and the Judicial System.

At Anderson University he teaches a variety of subjects like American Government, Research Methods, Political Parties and Behavior, and Constitutional Law. He also is the Pre-Law Advisor, preparing students for the law school admissions process, the LSAT, and the difficulty of law school. His students have gone on to work in government offices and on political campaigns in Washington D.C., for the Indiana Governor, and with Members of Congress. Dr. Frank serves as the Director of Anderson University's Center for Public Service. He helps prepare students for a life in public service careers to meet critical societal needs, and his leadership connects students to industry professionals, internships, and service opportunities.

On behalf of Indiana's 5th District, I thank Dr. Michael Frank for his incredible efforts as an educator to lead students on to success, as well as his contributions to Madison County through his work with public defenders. His passion has touched upon the lives of so many and will continue to do so in the future.

INTRODUCTION OF THE UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ACT OF 2025

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 19, 2025

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Universal Prekindergarten and Early Childhood Education Act of 2025, which would establish and expand prekindergarten programs in public and public charter schools for three- and four-year-olds.

This bill seeks a breakthrough in public education by providing funding for states to add prekindergarten for children at three and four years of age, like the kindergarten programs for five-year-olds now routinely available in public schools. This bill would take advantage of the safe facilities required in public schools.

This bill would provide federal funds to states to establish or expand universal, voluntary prekindergarten in public and public charter schools for three- and four-year-olds,

regardless of income. The classes, which would be full-day and run throughout the entire school year, would be taught by teachers who have equivalent or similar qualifications to those teaching other grades in the school. The funds would supplement, not supplant, other federal funds for early childhood education.

The success of Head Start and other pre-kindergarten programs, combined with the scientific evidence on the importance of brain development in early childhood, virtually mandates the expansion of early childhood education to all children. Early learning programs have been available only to the affluent, who can afford them, and to some low-income families in programs such as Head Start, which would be unaffected by this bill. This bill is a practical way to create universal, public pre-kindergarten. The goal of this bill is to provide the benefits of early childhood education to those who have been left out of this essential education.

We cannot afford to allow the most critical years of child development to pass unenriched. This bill responds both to the great needs of parents who seek early childhood education and neuroscience, which shows that a child's brain development begins much earlier than had been previously understood.

Considering the staggering cost of day care, the inaccessibility of early childhood education and the opportunity that early education offers to improve a child's chances of success, schooling for three- and four-year-olds is overdue. The absence of viable options for working families demands our immediate attention.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

WELCOMING HIS ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

HON. JOSH GOTTHEIMER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 19, 2025

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to welcome the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All-Holiness Bartholomew, to Washington, D.C. this week, and to congratulate him on receiving the distinguished Templeton Prize.

His All-Holiness has been a steadfast leader for the Orthodox Church, and especially for my constituents in New Jersey. He continues to encourage us all to reach toward peace, to love and respect our neighbors, and to uphold our values as a Nation.

At a time when hate and intolerance are surging across the country, His All-Holiness's focus on religious freedom is a powerful reminder that we must work together and respect one another. In the greatest country in the world, there should be no room for intolerance or hate of any kind.

As His All-Holiness Bartholomew has said, "We have it in our power either to increase the hurt inflicted on our world or to contribute toward its healing. The choice is ours." Together, we must work toward a world filled with healing and hope.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF CHARLES "CHARLIE" JAMES KIRK

SPEECH OF

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, the horrific murder of Charlie Kirk was reprehensible. Members of Congress pray for Charlie's wife, Erika, their two young children, and all who loved him during their time of mourning and grief. We also extend our prayers to all who were present on the Utah Valley University campus at the time of this tragedy, who will carry the trauma of that day with them forever.

In recent years, a disturbing and unacceptable pattern has emerged: individuals being targeted for their role in public life or for their association with political discourse. Violence of this nature is not an attack on one person alone—it is an assault on democracy itself, meant to silence debate, sow fear, and tear at the fabric of our civil society.

We remember the assassination attempt on Congresswoman Gabby Giffords, which left her critically injured and six innocent lives lost. We remember the shooting at a Congressional baseball game practice, which seriously wounded Congressman STEVE SCALISE and injured five others. We recall the chilling plot to kidnap Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer. We will not forget the storming of the United States Capitol on January 6th, which resulted in the deaths of five law enforcement officers and shook the very foundations of our democracy.

My own family still lives with the trauma of a near-deadly attack on my husband, Paul, in our home by an individual seeking to kidnap me—an act of violence that underscored in the most personal way the escalating threats that public officials and their loved ones endure.

We have also seen assassination attempts on the life of President Donald Trump; the arson targeting Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro's residence and family; the heart-breaking assassination of Minnesota House Speaker Emerita Melissa Hortman and her husband, and the attempted assassination of State Senator John Hoffman and his wife. And now, we are horrified by the murder of Charlie Kirk, targeted while exercising his right to speak freely on a college campus.

All of these incidents must be denounced unequivocally and without qualification. Violence has no place in our political process, in our communities, or in our country. At the same time, we have a solemn responsibility to act. Congress must work with state and local leaders, law enforcement, and communities to ensure the security of Members, staff, and constituents alike—so that all Americans may fully participate in civic life without fear. That also means we must address the epidemic of gun violence in our country to keep our children and their families safe.

Let us be clear: political differences must be resolved at the ballot box and through dialogue, never through the barrel of a gun or the threat of violence. The strength of our democracy lies not in unanimity, but in the peaceful contest of ideas. Together, we must recommit to protecting that principle and the American

people, to lowering the temperature of political rhetoric, and to honoring the dignity and humanity of every person engaged in public service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 19, 2025

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on September 18, 2025. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 277; YEA on Roll Call No. 278; and YEA on Roll Call No. 279.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF CHARLES "CHARLIE" JAMES KIRK

SPEECH OF

HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, as I expressed last week following Charlie Kirk's horrifying assassination, my heart goes out to Mr. Kirk's family and loved ones. The loss of anyone in such a violent manner is tragic and sadly all too common. It has raised important issues including the need to address gun violence, political violence, and the way all Americans relate to one another. Increasingly violent rhetoric in our politics and culture is manifesting itself in increasing political violence.

I'm grateful that this resolution addresses some of these issues.

I remember the series of assassinations and attempted assassinations that rocked the country in the 1960's and 1970's: Medgar Evers, John and Robert Kennedy, George Lincoln Rockwell, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Fred Hampton, Richard Nixon, and George Wallace. Hate, discrimination, and distrust led to political violence that tore the country apart. We need a national conversation about how we learn the lessons of our past and build a better future for everyone.

I encourage us all to reflect on the country we want to live in. And to ensure our words and actions point us in that direction. If we are to have a thriving democracy, we must be able to disagree and fight for what we believe in without denying each other's humanity. Much of the political rhetoric in recent years has failed this test. I pray we return to a place where, despite our differences, we can recognize the humanity in every one of us.

Tackling these issues will require a thoughtful and honest national conversation. The resolution that we will vote on today called on Members to honor the legacy of Charlie Kirk. I could not honestly lend my name to his legacy. Charlie Kirk had a conviction and passion for expressing his opinions and for moving them forward in the national conversation. Unfortunately, much of that legacy involved hateful rhetoric about many fellow Americans, specifically the LGBTQ community, Muslims, and other minorities, particularly Black women. For that reason, I will not vote for this resolution.

Mr. Kirk's assassination was a horrible crime against him, his family, and our Nation. I pray for all three.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF CHARLES "CHARLIE" JAMES KIRK

SPEECH OF

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern regarding the direction our national discourse has taken following the death of Charlie Kirk and to share my reservations about the resolution before us today.

I condemn—unequivocally and in the strongest terms—the violent murder of Charlie Kirk.

I am praying for his family and our Nation as we navigate the aftermath of last week's horrific shooting.

No one should be killed for what they say or what they believe, and any claim to the contrary betrays the values upon which this Nation was founded.

But my deep regret that Mr. Kirk was killed and my respect for his First Amendment right to express himself freely does not make him someone that should be elevated as a role model for the American public. The resolution before us today would do just that.

The fact is Charlie Kirk's rhetoric was divisive, disparaging, and too often rooted in grievance.

The beliefs he evangelized normalized fringe views on race, sex, and immigration.

I've spent my entire career—from the peak of the civil rights movement until today—advocating for equal rights for everyone, regardless of race, sex, or religion.

I've sought to carry on the important work of civil rights leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

I have worked to eradicate prejudices and stereotypes that suggest that the color of someone's skin, or their gender, or their religious beliefs could somehow limit their potential.

I believe strongly that America is stronger, safer, and more secure when everyone who lives here has the opportunity to achieve their highest potential.

When I was growing up, I never had a new textbook because people in power didn't think people that shared my skin color deserved them.

My right to vote was hardly guaranteed.

The first time I ran for mayor of my small town in Mississippi, the Ku Klux Klan showed up to intimidate me.

A lot has changed since then.

And we owe the progress this country has made toward equality to those who were brave enough to stand up to the people in power who perpetuated and institutionalized the prejudices that made groups of Americans second-class citizens.

Unfortunately, Charlie Kirk's statements resurrected the dangerous rhetoric of a dark past.

I cannot hold up as a role model someone who said:

"If I see a Black pilot, I'm going to be like, boy, I hope he's qualified." The Charlie Kirk Show, January 23, 2024.

"If you're a WNBA, pot-smoking, Black lesbian, do you get treated better than a United States marine?" The Charlie Kirk Show, December 8, 2022.

"Happening all the time in urban America, prowling Blacks go around for fun to go target white people, that's a fact. It's happening more and more." The Charlie Kirk Show, May 19, 2023.

"If I'm dealing with somebody in customer service who's a moronic Black woman, I wonder is she there because of her excellence, or is she there because of affirmative action?" The Charlie Kirk Show, January 3, 2024.

"If we would have said that Joy Reid and Michelle Obama and Sheila Jackson Lee and Ketanji Brown Jackson were affirmative action picks, we would have been called racists. Now they're coming out and they're saying it for us . . . You do not have the brain processing power to otherwise be taken really seriously. You had to go steal a white person's slot to go be taken somewhat seriously." The Charlie Kirk Show, July 13, 2023.

"MLK was awful. He's not a good person." America Fest, December 2023.

"I have a very, very radical view on this, but I can defend it, and I've thought about it. We made a huge mistake when we passed the Civil Rights Act in the 1960s." America Fest, December 2023.

"The American Democrat party hates this country. They wanna see it collapse. They love it when America becomes less white." The Charlie Kirk Show, March 20, 2024.

And all of that is to say nothing of what he said about religion, immigrants, and women, among other things.

I am more concerned than ever that the country is headed in the wrong direction. And I am concerned that those on the right are trying to use Charlie Kirk's tragic death to shame those who disagree with them into espousing their misguided views about what America is and what it should be.

This resolution does just that, so I must oppose it.

WELCOMING HIS ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

HON. NEAL P. DUNN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 19, 2025

Mr. DUNN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome his All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to the United States this week. My colleagues and I are honored to host him here in the House of Representatives and I know my Greek-Orthodox constituents are excited to have him visit our Nation's Capital. His All-Holiness is a champion of religious liberty, engaging in dialogues with leaders of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Moreover, he leads a congregation of 300 million church members worldwide and is the longest-serving Patriarch in the two-millennia history of the Church. We are blessed to have him here in Washington, D.C. this week.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF CHARLES "CHARLIE" JAMES KIRK

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my horror at the September 10, 2025