

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

Ms. 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

assassination of Charlie Kirk and to express my sincerest condolences to the Kirk family.

I attempted to add my name as a cosponsor to H. Res. 719, a resolution honoring the life and legacy of Mr. Kirk. However, due to a processing error beyond my control, I was not added as a cosponsor before the House adopted this resolution.

Political violence has no place in our society. I strongly believe it should be condemned in the strongest way possible and at every opportunity.

I was, and still remain, a strong supporter of this resolution and the sentiments contained therein.

I call upon civic leaders at all levels of American society to commit to constructive civic discourse and firmly reject violence against their political opponents.

HONORING MR. SYD LOOMIS

HON. VICTORIA SPARTZ

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 19, 2025

Mrs. SPARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable career and retirement of Mr. Syd Loomis, a lifelong Hoosier, dedicated professional, and beloved member of the Noblesville community.

Born in Waukegan, Illinois, to Joseph “Jay” and Marlene “Mitzi” Loomis, Syd grew up with strong family values that would guide him throughout his life. A 1978 graduate of Noblesville High School, he married his wife Jeanine in 1982, and together they raised three wonderful children—Caryn, Amy, and Spencer. Today, Syd is the proud grandfather of four granddaughters, who bring him great joy and who affectionately know him as a devoted supporter of their softball games, dance recitals, and family traditions.

Syd’s career in banking has spanned over 45 years. Beginning in 1980 as a teller at American National Bank, he went on to serve with AmeriTrust, Society, Key Bank, Metro, First Indiana, First National, BMO Harris, and, for the past 15 years to the day, The Farmers Bank, where he served as Assistant Vice President and Branch Manager. Syd was not just a banker, he was a mentor to young professionals, a trusted advisor to countless customers, and a friendly face who treated everyone like family. His service was recognized with numerous honors, including induction into the Indiana Bankers Association’s 40-Year Banker Club, the Community Pride Award in 2011, and the Keep Noblesville Beautiful Award in 2013.

Beyond his professional career, Syd has always given generously of his time and talents to his community. He has served on the boards of the Noblesville Chamber of Commerce, the Shepherd Center of Hamilton County, and the Hamilton Heights Youth Assistance Program. He is also well known for his love of the arts, beginning community theatre in 1998 and performing in beloved roles such as George Bailey in *It’s a Wonderful Life*, Daddy Warbucks in *Annie*, and the Tin Man in *The Wizard of Oz*. His performances earned several Encore Awards and brought joy to audiences across Hamilton County. Syd also shared his love of music in the choir of First Presbyterian Church, where his faith and voice have lifted others for decades.

Syd is affectionately known by many as the “unofficial mayor of Noblesville,” a fitting title for a man who never met a stranger and always left a lasting impression. I am personally grateful to have worked alongside Syd, who was my boss when I was a bank teller. His kindness, humility, and encouragement left a deep impression on me, as I know they have on so many others.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Indiana’s 5th Congressional District, I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to Mr. Loomis for his many years of dedicated service as a community leader and as a true community banker, the kind of which we need more.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF CHARLES “CHARLIE” JAMES KIRK

SPEECH OF

HON. TROY A. CARTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on H. Res. 719.

I will not vote for this resolution. While I stand firmly and without hesitation against all forms of violence, I cannot support language that requires us to praise a man who so often showed disdain and disrespect for others. This resolution is misleading. It attempts to make us forget the harm of his words and the pain caused by his ideology.

No one should ever be attacked or killed because of their political beliefs. Violence is wrong. Period. As Americans, we resolve our differences through debate, through dialogue, and through the ballot box—not through bloodshed. I believe deeply in the Constitution, and that includes the right to free speech, even when we strongly disagree with it. But free speech does not erase the responsibility to tell the truth about its consequences.

Charlie Kirk did not deserve to be murdered for his views. His life was taken unjustly, and that violence must be condemned in the strongest terms. My most sincere prayers go out to his wife, children, and his extended family during this time of great personal loss.

At the same time, we cannot ignore that he used his platform to demean Black women like Michelle Obama and Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, to dismiss diversity and fairness as “anti-White,” to question the qualifications of Black professionals, to mock LGBTQ Americans, to oppose health care for transgender people, and to promote the so-called “great replacement” theory. He even went so far as to say, “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 1960’s.” These are not harmless words. They carry the same spirit of division that once fueled Jim Crow—when racism and bigotry were written into law to deny people their rights and dignity.

As a son of the South, I know how deeply such words can wound. They open old scars, justify injustice, and threaten the unity of our future. That is why I reject both violence and hate speech. Violence because no life should be taken for an opinion. Hate speech because no life should be diminished by the false claim that some people are less American, less worthy, or less human.

I proudly represent a district that reflects the very fabric of this nation. Black, White, Latino, Asian, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, people of every faith and people of no faith. Men and women, gay and straight, transgender and nonbinary. Every person deserves dignity, safety, and equal protection under the law.

This is what it means to be American. We do not honor our democracy by praising division or by rewriting the truth. We honor it by recommitting ourselves to peace, to justice, and to equality. That is how we heal, and that is how we ensure that the failures of Jim Crow, the poison of racism, and the sting of bigotry never again define our Nation.

I close with the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who reminded us: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” Let us be the light, let us reject hate, and let us stand together as one Nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

HONORING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AFGHAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 19, 2025

Mr. SWALWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Afghan American Community Organization on the celebration of their tenth anniversary on September 20, 2025.

For a decade, the Afghan American Community Organization has served as a trusted, compassionate partner to Afghan and Afghan American families—strengthening civic participation, expanding opportunity, and celebrating a rich cultural heritage that is now a vibrant part of my district and the American story.

Whether it has been English language and citizenship classes, youth mentorship and college readiness, small business advising, or workforce development, the Afghan American Community Organization has opened doors for thousands in the Afghan American community. Its legal and resettlement clinics have helped newcomers navigate complex systems with dignity. The mental-health and women’s empowerment initiatives have provided care and community, and its cultural events have fostered understanding between neighbors.

When Afghans arrived in large numbers following the fall of Kabul, Afghan American Community Organization mobilized volunteers, partnered with faith and civic groups, and worked together with local, state, and federal agencies to secure housing, enroll children in school, connect families with health care, and ensure that no one was left behind.

On this milestone anniversary, I congratulate the Afghan American Community Organization Board, dedicated staff, volunteers, and community partners whose steadfast efforts made this achievement possible. Their work reminds us that welcoming the newcomer and lifting our neighbors are enduring American values.

I congratulate them on ten years of service, and wish the Afghan American Community Organization continued success in the decades ahead.