

core functions. Get rid of the people with expertise and give the core functions to other agencies without the expertise or the staff to handle them? That is not government efficiency. It is absurdity.

Last month, I introduced H. Res. 94 in defense of public schools and the Department of Education, and more than 85 of my colleagues have signed on. We will fight all efforts to defund and dismantle the important work the Department does, and we won't back down.

The consequences are clear: Closing the Department of Education will harm students, families, communities, and the economy. The majority of Americans support the Department of Education, and I know public school advocates will be working tirelessly to maintain the strong and vital Federal investment in our system of public education.

Donald Trump and Elon Musk might think that this ill-conceived abuse of power will go unchecked. They are about to find out how wrong they are.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

CONGRATULATING DAWSON-BOYD BLACKJACKS

(Mrs. FISCHBACH of Minnesota was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Dawson-Boyd Blackjacks on defeating the defending champs to claim their first-ever title 1A championship.

It has been 34 years since the Blackjacks have been to the State tournament, and their hard work paid off. With what felt like the entire town in Williams Arena, this game was a dream come true.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Blackjacks on their victory. They have made all of their families, community, and the Seventh District proud.

CONGRATULATING ALBANY HUSKIES ON UNDEFEATED SEASON

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Albany Huskies on their undefeated season, closing it out with a win over Waseca in the Class 2A championship last weekend.

These players were unshakable, even when the score was tied up. They knew their mission and executed, and they have made their families, the Albany community, and the entire Seventh District proud.

CONGRATULATING ALEXANDRIA CARDINALS ON CHAMPIONSHIP

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Alexandria Cardinals basketball team on defeating Mankato East for their first-ever 3A Boys championship title.

The senior co-captains, Sam Hagstrom and Chase Thompson, were especially excited, saying: "It has been a fun ride," and, "We ended things with a bang and left our mark," after their big win.

This is a closely bonded group of young men, and their teamwork certainly paid off.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Cardinals on their win and for making their families, community, and the entire Seventh District proud.

CONGRATULATING WEST CENTRAL AREA KNIGHTS

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the West Central Area girls' basketball team, the Knights, on their first-ever State championship in any sport for their school.

As the fourth seed in a season full of upsets, I know this was a hard-fought victory. They should all be so proud of everything they have accomplished this year. They have certainly made their families, community, and the entire Seventh District proud.

CONGRATULATING RON MERGEN

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Ron Mergen on 37 years of service to the city of Paynesville.

A beloved and respected member of the community, unsurprisingly, last year, he was voted Boss of the Year. I know his coworkers are sad to see him go, but I also know he won't be a stranger. He has been named the grand marshal of this year's Paynesville Town and Country Days parade.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Ron so much for his service to the community and congratulate him on a well-earned retirement.

FOOD BANKS FACING URGENT CRISIS

(Ms. MCBRIDE of Delaware was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. MCBRIDE. Mr. Speaker, across the country, food banks are facing an urgent crisis, and Delaware is no exception. Millions of dollars' worth of deliveries of vital food aid have been halted to food banks.

In February alone, more than 50 percent of the food that the Food Bank of Delaware distributed came from the Federal Government. Now, with shipments frozen and no clarity on whether they will be restored, they are in uncharted territory.

The Food Bank of Delaware is now uncertain whether they will receive 14 truckloads over the next 4 months. These halted deliveries represent over a quarter of the food expected to be received from the Federal Government for the rest of this fiscal year. Cathy Kanefsky, the CEO of the Food Bank of Delaware, shared with me that this would be devastating.

This is not an abstract issue. It is not a partisan issue. This is about families, working parents, seniors, veterans, and children. These are people who rely on food banks to get through the month.

One in eight Delawareans face food insecurity, and the Food Bank of Delaware has been a lifeline for thousands of families.

The truckloads in question represent over 600,000 meals that the food bank will not be able to put on the tables of Delawareans.

Yes, the Food Bank of Delaware plays a frontline role in combating hunger, but they offer more than just food. They provide dignity, hope, and a sense of community.

Food banks, which are already stretched thin, are now being asked to do even more with even less. The loss of Federal support jeopardizes their ability to serve effectively, placing additional strain on State and local resources.

At a time when grocery prices remain high and demand for assistance is great, the loss of these shipments could mean fewer meals for families in every corner of my State.

Further cuts at the hands of the administration to the USDA's local food purchasing assistance program only add to this crisis. At the direction of this administration, the USDA axed two programs that give schools and food banks assistance to buy food from local farms and ranchers. In Delaware alone, this will amount to \$2 million in cuts.

Just last month, I stood on this floor to raise the alarm about \$10 million in funding owed to Delaware farmers. Now, I stand here again to raise the alarm about the Trump administration taking their chain saw to another life-saving service that supports our farmers in feeding Delaware. All of this will result in fewer customers for Delaware's farmers and higher prices at the grocery store for Delaware's families.

The Trump administration has broken their promise time and time again to the American people, ripping funding and literal food from the hands of my constituents.

The USDA must restore these shipments and funding before the consequences become dire to families across Delaware.

CELEBRATING SEAFORD'S TRANSFORMATION

Ms. MCBRIDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the transformation happening in Seaford, Delaware, an investment in economic growth, opportunity, and the future of western Sussex County.

Seaford is a small city rich in history. Just last week, I had the privilege of meeting with Seaford's leadership to discuss the city's progress and their vision for the future.

Over the last decade, Seaford has transformed its small but vibrant downtown through Delaware's innovative Downtown Development District program, started by our former Governor, Jack Markell. Through hard work and dedicated investment, Seaford's Main Street has gone from 90 percent vacancy to more than 90 percent occupancy.

At the center of the next phase of Seaford's revitalization effort is the Nylon Capital Center, a project that will breathe new life into a space that was once a focal point of Seaford and

will soon serve as a hub for education, healthcare, and commerce.

With a \$60 million investment, including \$20 million in American Rescue Plan funds, the new Nylon Capital Center will expand access to education and workforce training with a new DelTech facility. It will make healthcare more accessible with a new TidalHealth medical site. Small businesses will have new space to grow, and a coworking center, the Mill, will foster entrepreneurship. Critically, it will remain home to the beloved Sal's Italian Restaurant.

This is a model of public and private partnership coming together to create shared prosperity. With local, State, Federal, and private investments, the future of Seaford is exactly what we should hope for in our small cities and towns across America. The leaders of Seaford, along with partners from across the State, are demonstrating what is possible when communities come together. I am proud to stand with them in this effort, and I look forward to seeing Seaford become a symbol of progress and opportunities for generations to come.

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CONGRATULATING EAST LANSING TROJANS

(Mr. BARRETT of Michigan was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the East Lansing Trojans on an incredible achievement, winning the State championship with a hard-fought 66-46 victory just a couple of weeks ago.

While the Michigan State Spartans are making a deep run in the tournament in the men's college basketball tournament this month, they need to look no further than across town at the East Lansing boys' basketball team to see another championship team in East Lansing.

This championship is the result of countless hours of practice and years of hard work, and it serves as a capstone to all of the time spent perfecting their craft, playing as a team, and working under the leadership of head coach Ray Mitchell.

A sincere congratulations to each and every one of them. This is a wonderful achievement, and our city is very proud of them.

CONGRATULATING FOWLER EAGLES GIRLS BASKETBALL

Mr. BARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Fowler Eagles girls' basketball team, who captured the State championship this past week-end with a commanding 53-29 victory.

I was at the Breslin Center to watch the game with two of my daughters: Eleanor, who just finished her first season of basketball, and Gwen, who is excited to start playing next year. These young ladies on the basketball court really served as a great example

for my own daughters and so many others across our State.

What we saw was more than just great basketball. We saw poise, teamwork, and excellence, especially for young girls like my daughters who could watch that in action.

I thank the Fowler Eagles for inspiring the next generation and making our community proud. Gwen, my 7-year-old, wants autographs from each team member, so I hope we can catch up with them sometime for that.

Congratulations to the team on an incredible season. Our city is so proud of them.

SOCIAL SECURITY IS NOT A GIVEAWAY

(Mr. KENNEDY of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to President Trump and Elon Musk's attacks on the safety nets that countless western New Yorkers and people across the country have earned and need. Hardworking Americans rely on the promise of a secure and dignified retirement. That promise is called Social Security, and it is a solemn promise we must keep.

Yet, from Elon Musk accessing private beneficiary data to Trump's hand-picked Acting Commissioner declaring living recipients to be deceased in order to claw back their benefits, Social Security is under fire.

Starting next week, a new rule will create further barriers, requiring in-person identity verification for those who are unable to register online. This will hurt the most vulnerable people in our community: people with disabilities, limited income, inadequate access to technology or transportation, and our seniors who rely on phone-based support. At the same time, the administration is planning to close offices around the country, making it even harder for people to access these services.

These reckless actions are robbing the hardworking men and women that I represent in western New York. It is a slap in the face to every American citizen who has spent decades paying into the system, and every widow, person with a disability, and child who lost a parent too soon who deserves and needs the benefits that allows them to survive.

Social Security is not a giveaway. The program is fully funded by the people who rely on it, by the sweat and hard-earned wages of American workers. Without Social Security, nearly 22 million Americans—many of them seniors on a fixed income or people with disabilities—will be plunged into poverty overnight.

In my district alone, over 167,000 people rely on Social Security benefits to pay their bills, put food on the table, and afford their prescriptions. It has allowed seniors to stay in their homes,

help widows keep the lights on, and ensure that people who have worked their whole lives don't spend their final days scraping by.

Despite the incredible progress we have made as a Nation to keep people out of poverty, President Trump and Elon Musk are rolling back the clock in order to give tax cuts to billionaires and the ultrarich. Elon Musk even called Social Security the biggest Ponzi scheme of all time. Perhaps he has this confused with his own plan to cut taxes for the richest among us, including himself, at the expense of everyone else.

Congress must reject the administration's attempt to weaken Social Security. We need to fight tooth and nail against those who want to raise the retirement age, reduce benefits, or privatize this program for the benefit of corporations and the ultrarich. Instead, we should be strengthening Social Security to protect this vital safety net and fighting for an America where working people get to retire with dignity.

President Trump needs to keep his hands off Social Security.

HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY TO EDGAR CARL WILKE

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true American, World War II veteran Edgar Carl Wilke, as he celebrates his 100th birthday.

A resident of West Seneca, New York, Mr. Wilke served our Nation with courage in World War II, where he was wounded in battle defending the freedoms we hold dear. After enlisting from his hometown of Buffalo, he achieved the rank of private first class while serving in the 24th Infantry Division of the 21st Regiment.

For his bravery and heroic conduct in the Pacific theater, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal. For wounds taken during the Battle of the Philippines, he received a Purple Heart. Along with these two high honors, he has received numerous other awards, including the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with two bronze service stars, the World War II Victory Medal, the Combat Infantryman Badge, and the Marksman Badge with Rifle Bar.

Mr. Wilke's sacrifice is a reminder that the liberties we enjoy today were secured by the bravery of patriots like him. We owe our veterans more than gratitude. We owe them our unwavering commitment to ensuring that they receive the care, benefits, respect, and recognition that they deserve.

On behalf of the people of western New York and a grateful Nation, I wish Mr. Wilke a very happy 100th birthday. I thank him for his service, and may his century of life continue to be an inspiration to us all.

VOTERS SENT US TO CONGRESS TO LOWER COSTS

(Mr. OLSZEWSKI of Maryland was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)