

Taxpayer's Dime Act, a critical step toward restoring accountability in the Federal workforce. This bill will end the abuse of official time which allows Federal employees to engage in union activities while being paid by the taxpayers.

For years, Federal employees have spent millions of taxpayer dollars on union-related work instead of performing their official responsibilities. Federal employees spent 3.6 million hours performing union-related activities in 2016 alone, costing taxpayers \$177.2 million.

Even after reforms under the Trump administration brought that number down to 2.6 million hours and \$135 million in 2019, the lack of unified reporting means the full scope of the problem remains unknown today. This is money that should have gone to serve the American people, not to subsidize private union interests.

Ending "official time" is a common-sense step to ensure taxpayer dollars are used responsibly and to increase accountability across the Federal workforce. Public funds should serve the American people, not private union interests.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

HONORING EDGAR CARL WILKE ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true American hero, World War II veteran Edgar Carl Wilke, as he celebrates his 100th birthday. A native Buffalonian and longtime resident of West Seneca, New York, Mr. Wilke served our Nation with courage and distinction during World War II.

Enlisting from his hometown, he joined the 24th Infantry Division of the 24th Regiment, achieving the rank of Private First Class. During his service in the Pacific theater, Mr. Wilke displayed extraordinary bravery, earning the Bronze Star Medal for his heroic actions.

While fighting in the Philippines, he was gravely wounded by an enemy grenade so severely that those awarding him the Purple Heart believed he would not survive. After enduring months in the hospital, he returned home where Mr. Wilke built a life of love and dedication alongside his beloved wife, Joan, until her passing in 2014.

Through it all, Mr. Wilke has remained a man of deep faith, trusting in God and embracing the simple joys of life.

In addition to the Bronze Star and Purple Heart, Mr. Wilke has been honored with numerous commendations, 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.

As Mr. Wilke celebrates this incredible milestone surrounded by five generations of family, we are reminded that the freedoms we cherish were secured by the courage and sacrifice of patriots like him.

His life is a testament to resilience, service, and an unwavering love for the country and community he calls home.

Western New York and the United States of America are better because of him, and it is an honor to celebrate his incredible story.

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

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I have the distinct honor of congratulating the University at Buffalo women's basketball team on their incredible victory in the women's NIT championship this past weekend.

On April 5, before a packed and energized Alumni Arena, the UB Bulls women's basketball team triumphed over Troy 88-84 accomplishing something few teams get to do: end their season with a championship win.

This moment marked the deepest postseason run in the history of UB basketball, men's or women's. However, this is more than just a win; this is a legacy in the making.

UB guard Lani Cornfield, a proud member of the Seneca Nation Indians and alum of Lake Shore High School, said it best: This just put Buffalo back on the map.

I extend a heartfelt congratulations to each of the players on this remarkable team:

Mallory Daly, Noelani Cornfield, Sitota Gines, Kirsten Lewis-Williams, Paula Lopez, Makenna Shaffer, Ariana Seawell, Caylen Spano, Terah Harness, Jordyn Beaty, and Chellia Watson.

I also recognize the coaching staff that has helped shape this program into a powerhouse and who continue the proud tradition of UB women's basketball: Head Coach Becky Burke, Associate Head Coach Jacey Brooks, Assistant Coach James Ewing, Assistant Coach Erin Sinnott, Director of Basketball Operations Allese Williams, and Vice President and Director of Athletics Mark Alnutt.

As UB guard Chellia Watson, who scored 23 points in the final game, put it: The key to victory was defense and grit, just not giving up, and showing we have got all the fight in the world.

Now, that is the Buffalo way.

This team's journey reminds us all what is possible when talent, opportunity, and unwavering determination come together. These young women are not just champions; they are role models inspiring the next generation of female athletes and showing young people in our community what can be achieved through dedication, resilience, and teamwork.

On behalf of western New York and our great Nation, I offer our heartfelt congratulations. We are proud, we are inspired, and we can't wait to see this incredible team in action next year defending their title.

Go Bulls.

□ 1030

HONORING WILLIAM MAY

(Mr. PATRONIS of Florida was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. PATRONIS. Mr. Speaker, this morning, I rise with a heavy heart over the loss of one of Florida's finest.

On Wednesday, April 2, Walton County Sheriff's Deputy William May responded to a local disturbance where he was fired upon by an armed suspect. As Deputy May returned fire, he was wounded by the assailant and subsequently died.

Due to his bravery, Deputy May was able to end the potential threat to the community before succumbing to his injuries.

Deputy May served the Walton County Sheriff's Office for more than a decade, beginning his career as a communications officer in 2014 before taking the oath of office in 2019 as a deputy sheriff. During his time in law enforcement, Deputy May earned lifesaving awards and multiple letters of commendation.

Today, the Walton County Sheriff's Office mourns the loss of a fellow deputy. The State of Florida mourns the loss of this hero. A wife mourns the loss of her husband, and four beautiful children mourn the loss of their father.

Unfortunately, Deputy May's story is one of many first responders around our country sacrificing their personal lives working 24/7/365, missing birthdays, anniversaries, and other special occasions in order to keep our American neighborhoods safe.

It is an honor to represent parts of Walton County and share that responsibility with Congressman NEAL DUNN, who joins me in this prayer for the members of our local law enforcement.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity to honor Walton County Deputy William May for the ultimate sacrifice he made for our communities.

RECOGNIZING JESSIE ECHAURY

(Mr. CORREA of California was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jessie Echaury for his military service and contributions to our community.

In 2016, Jessie served our Nation as a U.S. Army soldier in Afghanistan. A decade later, he now serves other veterans as president of Cal State Fullerton's Student Veterans of America chapter.

In this role, he advocates for veteran students struggling with invisible wounds like PTSD.

I thank Jessie for his service to our Nation and for his commitment to fellow students who are veterans.

RECOGNIZING CHARLIE ZHANG

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Charlie Zhang for his philanthropy and his induction into the Orange County Hall of Fame.

Charlie comes from humble beginnings. He came to this country penniless and unable to speak English but with a dream. With hard work, he started a number of businesses, and he achieved the American Dream.

Now, Charlie is known throughout Orange County for supporting education and the arts. Some of his most important contributions have helped business and economics students at my own alma mater, Cal State Fullerton.

I thank Charlie for being a role model and helping to uplift Orange County's next generation. I congratulate him on a well-deserved induction into Orange County's Hall of Fame.

HONORING SERRATO SISTERS

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate sisters Alicia, Anabelle, and Angelica Serratos for their accomplishments as part of the Santa Ana High School girls' wrestling team.

Alicia, Anabelle, and Angelica took home an impressive combined record of 104 wins and 12 losses into their recent CIF Southern Section girls' championship meets.

Their parents, Fernando and Monica, are both former wrestlers and currently coach at Santa Ana High School. Their guidance has helped their daughters, the sisters, and many other champs at Santa Ana High School.

I wish Alicia, Anabelle, and Angelica success in their wrestling careers, and I thank the Serratos family for showing Orange County how it is done.

Go Saints.

RECOGNIZING SENIOR SANTA & FRIENDS

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Senior Santa & Friends program that supports many seniors across Orange County.

Each year, this program brings joy to seniors and adults with severe disabilities, bringing them gifts and special requests, gifts that make changes in their lives like household appliances, medical equipment, clothing, and nutritional supplements.

Senior Santa & Friends has been able to deliver 2,100 gifts annually to seniors in need in our community.

Please join me in thanking Senior Santa & Friends for their dedication to helping our community make life much better during the holidays for our seniors.

CONGRATULATING ALEXANDRIA HIGH SCHOOL ROBOTICS TEAM

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

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Mechatronics Team

3133, the Alexandria Area High School's robotics team, on winning the Impact Award.

This prestigious award will send the team to the world championship in Houston, Texas. This is their third Impact Award, and it is clear why. The team is extremely dedicated, having offered hours of their time in the summer to work with elementary and middle school robotics teams.

Teammates Bridger Klavetter and Gunner Sellnow said they appreciate the worldwide community that the sport has allowed them to be part of and said that their team works to be professional in defeat and gracious in victory.

On behalf of the Seventh District, I wish them the best of luck in Houston.

DEFENDING MEDICAID FOR FAMILIES LIKE THE CURRANS

(Mr. HIMES of Connecticut was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, in this Chamber, as early as today, we may be passing legislation that is explicitly designed to maintain historically low tax rates on the Nation's wealthiest people.

The richest people in America will be served by this institution so that they can pay the lowest tax amounts possible. The corporations in this country must have their record-low tax rates maintained.

The problem is this comes with a cost, and that cost will be paid, as the Republicans have laid it out for us to see, by the Medicaid program and by the addition of trillions of dollars to the United States debt.

Let's talk for a second about Medicaid because it serves about 80 million Americans. Not all Americans have experience with it, but an awful lot do. We are told, and the fantasy is, that the money can be saved by identifying waste, fraud, and abuse.

Make no mistake, that is a fantasy. If you are rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse, you hire more people, investigators, and auditors to go after it. We are doing the exact opposite. Elon Musk and DOGE are firing the people who go after waste, fraud, and abuse.

It turns out that people don't wear signs around their necks saying: "I am committing waste, fraud, and abuse." No, it is hard to identify this stuff. It exists, but it does not exist in any conceivable number that the Republicans are talking about cutting out of the Medicaid program.

That number is almost \$100 billion a year, \$100 billion out of roughly \$600 billion in spending. Mind you, that is not trimming. That is taking a wheel off the car.

Here is what is going to happen. As I said, Medicaid covers 80 million Americans with health insurance. It also provides the funding that allows grandma to stay in an assisted living facility after she has run out of assets.

What I really want to do is tell you about Conner Curran. Conner is a 14-year-old from the town of Ridgefield, which I have the honor of representing. His mom is a teacher. His dad works for a local municipality. These are wonderful, middle-class folks just like anyone else in this country.

The problem is that 10 years ago, when he was 4 years old, Conner was diagnosed with Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Duchenne muscular dystrophy is a terrible disease. Your muscles waste away, including your heart and your lung muscles. As a consequence, people who have this terrible diagnosis tend to live between 20 and 30 years. Conner is 14.

Lately, because of breakthrough research, some people diagnosed with Duchenne muscular dystrophy are living into their forties and fifties.

You might imagine what the Curran family felt when those research programs were devastated by Elon Musk and DOGE. Imagine that.

The real threat to Conner is what is going to happen in this Chamber this week as they find a way to slash Medicaid.

Conner's medicines, the medicines that have kept him alive, cost thousands of dollars a month. A middle-class family can't pay that. Medicaid does.

His lung function is compromised, so he needs a \$12,000 machine to breathe. He needs help in school. He wants to go to college, but he needs a little help because he is severely handicapped by this terrible disease.

Conner comes to my office almost every year to tell me about his aspirations and to beg that we keep funding not just the research that may provide him with a normal lifespan but those things that give him a reasonable quality of life, a shot of achieving that dream of going to college.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues are not voting on numbers this week, although there are billions involved. My colleagues are certainly not voting on waste, fraud, or abuse. Let's leave that fantasy behind. My colleagues are voting this week on what kind of future, if any, Conner can expect and what kind of future, if any, 80 million Americans who rely on Medicaid will have.

My colleagues must take seriously the pain that is about to be caused to some of the most vulnerable Americans out there as they think about their vote, as they think about what they are trying to achieve, as they think about what they aspire this country to be.

HANDS OFF SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mr. MAGAZINER of Rhode Island was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MAGAZINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the more than 120,000 people in my district who count on Social Security, a sacred promise earned through decades of hard work.