

□ 1215

## HONORING VICTIMS OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, on April 24, throughout the country and throughout the world, Armenians recognized the Armenian genocide that took place from 1915 to 1923 at the hands of the Ottoman Empire.

I stand here today to confront it, empowered by facts, and determined that we never, ever forget the Armenian genocide, the first genocide that took place in the 20th century. Obviously, the Holocaust was to follow later on. It is a dark history, but we should never, ever forget our history.

Azerbaijan's President Aliyev, much like Putin of Russia, has led an ethnic cleansing and weaponized starvation against Armenians still today, notwithstanding the Minsk agreements that he has violated.

Over 120,000 Armenians in the last 2 years have been driven out of their homeland of Nagorno-Karabakh, otherwise known as Artsakh. Many of them are still today imprisoned and abused, and Azerbaijan must be held accountable.

We cannot remain silent. I have joined my colleagues in urging Secretary Marco Rubio to enforce section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act, demanding an end to United States military assistance to the Nation of Azerbaijan. They do not need it. They have violated the peace agreement of Minsk.

America must make it clear: We stand together in unity and continue to tell stories of the past to ensure future generations never forget.

## HONORING DONALD "DUDE" PAYNE

(Mr. WEBER of Texas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the outstanding service of my dear friend, one Commissioner Donald "Dude" Payne, who has dedicated the last 24 years of his life to Brazoria County with an absolutely unmatched spirit of service as well as leadership.

Over these many years, Commissioner Payne has been a steadfast champion for the people of Brazoria County. He has tirelessly worked to meet the needs of our community, always treating everyone he encountered with dignity and respect. Whether it was assisting families in times of crises, whether it was spearheading critical infrastructure projects, or just simply supporting the growth of our local economy, Dude Payne never missed a beat, Madam Speaker. His hard work and selfless dedication have been the cornerstones of his service.

Dude set a gold standard for public service, one defined by integrity, compassion, as well as humility. His love for Brazoria County and its people shines brightly in everything he has done. As he enters this next chapter of life, I want to express my heartfelt

gratitude on behalf of Brazoria County and beyond. I thank Dude for his unwavering commitment to our beloved county.

Blessings to him, his wonderful wife, Deborah, his children, his grandchildren, and, yes, great-grandchildren.

We know he will be just as impactful in retirement as he was in public service. His leadership will leave a giant hole to fill in Brazoria County.

I congratulate my friend on a well-earned retirement. May God bless him richly.

## HONORING JUDGE OGDEN BASS

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of a dedicated public servant from Brazoria County, Judge Ogden Bass, who was called home to be with our Lord on November 23, 2024, at the young age of 90.

I had the privilege of knowing Judge Bass over the years, and his commitment to our community was absolutely unwavering. He was a proud veteran of the United States Army. He dedicated his career to the pursuit of justice, serving as Brazoria County District Attorney, Texas Assistant Attorney General, and presiding for three terms over the 300th District Court of Brazoria County.

Judge Bass was not only known for just his wisdom and fairness in the courtroom but also for his deep compassion. He made himself available to the people he served. He would often arrive at the courthouse at 6 a.m. in the morning and be there until 5 p.m. so that any resident who needed the opportunity to be heard had that opportunity. If you needed help, Judge Bass was there.

May God bless his family, especially his beloved bride of 70 years, Nan Gayle.

May the judge's legacy of integrity, service, and justice continue to guide Brazoria County for generations to come.

## HONORING JOHN LEE SULLIVAN

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor a true Texan whose life reflected the very best our great State had to offer. John Lee Sullivan, a fifth-generation Galveston Island resident, went home to be with our Lord on December 24, 2024.

John's contributions to Texas were immeasurable. He served veterans through the General Land Office and Veterans Land Board. He launched successful ventures in real estate and poured his heart into the Sullivan Land and Cattle Company, caring deeply for the land and the livestock.

John also served his community with passion, sitting on the Galveston City Council, serving as mayor pro tem, and contributing to organizations like the Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association. His leadership and his faith have left a lasting mark.

May God bless his family, including his beloved wife of 53 years, Cindy, and may his legacy continue to shine and be a beacon for Galveston.

## REPUBLICANS PLAN TO CUT SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise to first and foremost submit an article by—I hope everyone gets to read it. We will be circulating it to all Members—about the Trump plan to go after our university system and destroy the research that goes on at our universities and massive cuts. As Mr. Zakaria points out, this would decimate our economy, and I think every Member of Congress needs to know.

Madam Speaker, I also heard Representative John Kasich on television, just before I came here, talking about how Democrats don't have a plan; they don't have a plan that they are going to utilize. I have great respect for John, but I will say yes, under HAKEEM JEFFRIES, we do have a plan, especially as it relates to Social Security.

Our colleagues on the other side do not have a plan, or the plan that they have proposed is to cut benefits to Social Security.

Madam Speaker, I don't know if you realize how many Social Security recipients you have in your district, but there are over 170,000 of them, including 134,000 retirees, including 18,000 disabled workers, 8,000 widows, 3,000 spouses, and 9,000 children.

Madam Speaker, here is the most important thing. Most Members of Congress don't realize this. Do you know how much money comes into your district monthly to those recipients? That is \$318 million that Mr. Trump and Republican leadership want to cut.

A 20 percent cut across the board to Social Security would decimate people across all districts, including Iowa and Connecticut and every other district.

We have a plan. Here is our plan. Social Security—and the American people, especially the people in our audience today ought to understand—hasn't been enhanced by Congress since 1971. Richard Nixon was President of the United States. There are more than 70 million Americans who rely on Social Security. Of those 70 million, for over 30 million of them, this is the only retirement benefit that they have.

Madam Speaker, we want to make sure that there is an across-the-board increase. Under the leadership of HAKEEM JEFFRIES, that is what you will see, an across-the-board increase, a tax cut proposal for people who have to work out of necessity who would end up having to pay taxes on their Social Security. We pay for it to make sure that it doesn't impact the trust fund.

We also pay for the repeal of WEP and GPO because that is vitally important as well. We also make sure that there is no longer a waiting period for disability where we see that so many people have died waiting to receive their disability payment.

It is long overdue for the number one antipoverty program for the elderly

and for children of this country. More disability goes out to veterans from Social Security than goes out from the VA.

Congress needs to act. I would hope it would be bipartisan, but we can't even get a hearing, let alone pass a bill.

What is there to be afraid of? Every constituent listening to this ought to demand of their Member of Congress—if you disagree, if you have got a better plan, for God's sake, put it forward. How much longer do the American people have to wait to receive the benefits that they paid for?

This is an earned benefit. This is no entitlement like the other side calls it. People paid for it, and you can check it out right on your paycheck. It says FICA, Federal insurance contribution. Whose? Yours. You have paid for this benefit. Your government, your Congress, has let you down. They have not addressed this since 1971. It is long overdue that we not only address this but enhance this so that Americans get what they richly deserve, especially those in Iowa.

#### WISCONSIN IN THE NEWS

(Mr. GROTHMAN of Wisconsin was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, we had an interesting 2 weeks out of this building, and sadly my home State of Wisconsin made the news again, in an effort to remove not just any person here illegally but somebody who had broken the law, an abuser, somebody who under normal circumstances would not be viewed favorably.

We had a judge in Wisconsin stop the hearing. Oh, let's not worry about putting this guy in jail. Let's let him sneak out the back door so he is not removed from this country.

This was after about a month ago, our Governor, Tony Evers, nice guy, came out with a directive implying that State employees ought not be that gung ho when it came to removing State employees from this country if they were here illegally.

We have two examples in Wisconsin alone in which elected officials aren't on the page of addressing the immigration laws.

I think it is important that we all be articulate enough to explain to people back home why these immigration laws are necessary and be articulate enough to explain we are not being mean to immigrants.

I do not hear enough people talk about the fact that in the prior 3 years—it goes up and down by year—but if you take a rolling average, in the last 3 years, we have over 800,000 people every year sworn in as new citizens legally in this country. How often do you hear about that? There are 850,000 people who did it right. It is not impossible to make your way here.

By the way, that is historically a very high number. If you go back to the fifties and sixties, frequently that

number was only a little over 100,000. The number of people being sworn in as new citizens is already eight times what they were in the sixties and fifties.

□ 1230

Nobody should apologize or say that we are being mean or not letting people in here. When we let in people who came here illegally, what we are doing is kicking anybody who did it the right way in the face.

We know we have a housing crisis in this country. When you begin to flood this country with another 10 million people, as happened during the Biden administration, given the law of supply and demand, we know it is driving up rents, making it more difficult all the time for the average American to attain the American Dream.

I also point out that we have significant numbers of visas which allow people to come here, as well. We have about 900,000 temporary workers or trainees at any time. We have well over 5 million people here on visas for temporary visitors for business and pleasure. As far as college students are concerned, we allow another over 400,000 people into this country on student visas.

It is incredibly easy to get into this country. Rather, it is not always easy, but millions of people come into this country legally and are able to do so. We do not have to have sympathy for people who came here illegally.

I think it is important that we educate the American public on that because we are soon going to have to start the next phase where we not only get rid of the criminal element that came in here, but we have to get rid of the 10 million people who may not have broken a horrible law but broke the law just by coming here.

It is a complete kick in the teeth to anybody who wants to come here legally to allow the 10 million people who Joe Biden let in during the last 4 years stay here.

There is one more thing I will address as we begin to work on Donald Trump's big, beautiful bill. I remind people in this Chamber that we have a system of benefits right now whereby, if you are a single parent and you marry the father of your children or mother of your children, you can easily lose over \$25,000 a year. In other words, the U.S. Government spends \$25,000 a year bribing single parents not to get married.

I thought we were supposed to treat people equally in this country, but we don't treat people equally. We have an overwhelming bias in favor of keeping parents from being married. I hope Members in this Chamber remember that as we put together Donald Trump's big, beautiful bill. We should not pass that bill unless we do something first about the massive marriage hatred that we have.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BICE) at 2 p.m.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Holy and eternal God, the world grieves the death of Your own good and faithful servant, Pope Francis.

In his gentle and disarming manner, he showed the world the wide embrace of Your mercy. In his humble and unassuming way, he revealed the promise and strength of Your love for all creation.

By his commitment to the poor, the downtrodden, the overlooked, and the underappreciated, Pope Francis showed us how to live Your Gospel of compassion, kindness, and faith.

Truly, Pope Francis lived his life in honor of You, O Lord, and now in his death, he honors You still. Receive him into the eternal joy of Your kingdom.

May the testimony of his life and his death give evidence that whether we live or whether we die, we are Yours, O Lord.

May his witness be unto us an inspiration that we would choose, in the time allotted to us in our lives, to live as faithfully each day for You.

In Your eternal name we pray.  
Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### PRESIDENT TRUMP'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)