

heart to honor the life and legacy of a great man, a political icon, and a friend and mentor to many, Congressman John LaFalce.

John Joseph LaFalce was born October 6, 1939, and passed away on April 11, 2025. He was laid to rest earlier this week.

While we mourn the loss of this extraordinary leader, we also celebrate the incredible contributions he made, not just to western New York but to New York State and our entire Nation.

The son of a union steward and bakery worker, John never forgot where he came from. His upbringing shaped his politics. He knew what it meant to struggle. His empathy and faith drove his mission in elected office.

John lived his faith by fighting for labor rights, defending the vulnerable, and standing up for the voiceless. It was his moral compass that guided every vote, every word, and every fight. He knew that serving in Congress was a sacred calling, and he fulfilled it with grace, conviction, and compassion.

Before entering public life, he served our country as a captain in the United States Army. Upon his return from the military, his continued commitment to service drove him toward government. He served in both the New York State Assembly and New York Senate. Then, in 1974, he represented western New York in this Chamber for three decades.

John came to Washington in the aftermath of Watergate, part of a new wave of lawmakers determined to restore integrity and rebuild the public's trust in our government.

Congressman LaFalce spent nearly 30 years shaping national economic policy, leading the House Committee on Small Business and serving as the top Democrat on the Banking Committee. He built a reputation as a thoughtful, deliberative, and independent voice. He was a leader, not beholden to politics but to the truth and, above all, to the people he served in western New York.

On the Committee on Financial Services, John emerged as an early and steadfast voice against the predatory practices of payday lenders and subprime scams that trapped working families in endless debt.

He fought to strengthen consumer protections for women by introducing and passing legislation that created opportunities and resources for female entrepreneurs, opening doors that had long been shut.

Yet, perhaps nothing exemplifies Congressman John LaFalce's leadership more than his fearless fight for our community following the Love Canal disaster.

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At a time when so many were reluctant to confront the truth, he stood firmly with the people of Niagara Falls, ensuring they would not be ignored or left behind. He put on boots, walked into basements flooded with

toxic sludge, stood with families in their hour of need, and demanded more from our government.

John directed the eyes of the world onto western New York and forced the Nation to reckon with the dangers of industrial pollution. He pushed for Federal recognition of this crisis and secured an emergency declaration, ultimately creating the Superfund program. His efforts helped bring justice and relief to families facing an unthinkable public health catastrophe and environmental calamity.

John LaFalce was not afraid to take a lonely stand when his conscience demanded it. He voted against authorizing the war in Iraq not once but twice. He challenged legislation he felt went too far, even if it came at a political cost. He never stopped thinking independently, and he never stopped thinking about what was right for western New York.

Beneath his tough exterior in Washington was a profoundly loving and gracious soul who treated everyone like family. To him, nothing was more important than family.

At his funeral service this past Monday, John's beloved son, Martin, told the story of a devoted father with a tender heart and a love for the joys of life.

Congressman LaFalce leaves behind a legacy of service, of decency, and of standing up always for western New York.

I am personally grateful to Congressman LaFalce for the guidance and wisdom that he provided me. It has made me a better Representative for our community.

I offer my prayers and deepest condolences to his wife, Patricia; his son, Martin; and all of his loved ones.

May Congressman John LaFalce rest in peace and power.

RECOGNIZING BLACK APRIL

(Mrs. KIM of California was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. KIM. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Black April and 50 years since the Fall of Saigon.

Over 8.7 million Americans served during the Vietnam war, including 2.7 million who put boots on the ground.

We will always remember the 58,281 U.S. servicemembers who gave everything for freedom, and we rally with our Gold Star families and the loved ones of the 1,573 Americans who remain missing in action.

Many of my constituents fled Vietnam in the Fall of Saigon and found their new home in Orange County in southern California. I am proud to have witnessed many of them becoming very successful members of our society, thriving in all sectors that make America great, and I am so proud to call many of them friends.

Our Vietnamese-American community knows well that we cannot take freedom for granted.

To our Vietnam-era veterans: Welcome home. Know that your service protected freedom on the world stage, and we are very grateful.

ELECTION INTEGRITY

(Mr. SUBRAMANYAM of Virginia was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, for years now, we have heard a lot of false accusations about rigged elections and voter fraud.

For instance, despite accusations that noncitizens were casting ballots in Virginia, studies found that there were zero instances of noncitizens illegally voting over the past 20 years.

Let's be honest, these accusations erode public trust and threaten our democracy.

Some localities are stepping up to fight those accusations. Two of those localities in my district are Prince William County and Fairfax County, which recently won the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's Clearinghouse Awards, or the Clearies.

Prince William County, in particular, was the first county to publish voting result tapes online in Virginia history. They are not only saving the results, but they are publishing them.

Here is the truth: In Prince William County, Fairfax County, and counties all across the country, officials are working tirelessly to ensure our elections are safe and secure. That is accountability, transparency, and democracy in action.

I congratulate Prince William and Fairfax Counties on their awards, and I look forward to working with them and fighting false allegations about our elections.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF SAIGON

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 50th anniversary of the Fall of Saigon.

Thousands of Vietnamese families escaped during the war, coming to America, and Virginia, in search of safety, opportunity, and a new life. There are now over 2.3 million Vietnamese Americans in the U.S.

Many Vietnamese-American families call Virginia home, and Vietnamese Americans have become an integral part of our community, from public service and the arts to groundbreaking work in science, business, and education.

I am proud of the work being done to support Vietnamese refugees right here in Virginia.

One example is Boat People SOS, an organization founded to help Vietnamese refugees. They have rescued over 25,000 Vietnamese boat people. Since then, they have expanded their services to aid immigrants, refugees, victims of trafficking, disadvantaged students, and survivors of violence in the United States.

Today, I recognize the strength, courage, and spirit of the Vietnamese community in Virginia's 10th District

and across the country, and I say to our Vietnamese veterans: Welcome home.

CUTS TO CASA PROGRAMS

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, we have heard how the recent DOGE cuts are impacting Federal employees, seniors, and veterans, but these cuts are also impacting our children, particularly vulnerable children.

Recently, the Department of Justice announced the termination of Federal grants to support court-appointed special advocates, known as CASA programs.

CASA programs cultivate trained and appointed volunteers who advocate for abused and neglected children in the courtroom and beyond.

The children they serve often need to be removed from unsafe homes and placed in foster care. At a time when they need it most, the volunteers provide a voice for these children.

Fairfax County's CASA program, for instance, has served over 8,500 kids in our region, including 376 in this fiscal year. They do incredible work to help place children in permanent homes and set them on a path for a brighter future.

The funding CASA receives from the Victims of Crime Act is now on the chopping block. These cuts will put a strain on already stretched thin court-appointed special advocate teams in Virginia and around the country. The result? More vulnerable children with less support.

We must stop these cuts and fight to protect the children that these programs serve.

OPPOSING CUTS TO PUBLIC MEDIA SYSTEM

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, finally, I rise today to address the administration's efforts to dismantle a cornerstone of American speech, our public media system.

The administration is calling on Congress to rescind appropriations for PBS and NPR, two public media institutions that have served Americans for nearly 60 years.

Each month, 36 million people watch their local PBS stations. PBS KIDS averages 15.5 million monthly users, including my kids. More broadly, PBS and NPR tell the American story through arts, culture, and history programs.

Let's be clear: This is not about budget cuts or making government efficient. This is a gutting of an institution that many people, especially those living in rural areas, rely on for information and trusted programming. In regions with limited or no broadcast access, PBS and NPR are among the few sources of media that people have to stay informed.

The administration argues that this move is necessary to prevent America's culture from being reengineered. Make no mistake: Cutting public media doesn't preserve our culture. It silences local voices, weakens civic engagement and education, and strips away the resources that help children learn.

Mr. Speaker, we must oppose these cuts.

CONGRATULATING MCCUTCHEON HIGH SCHOOL'S MAVERICKS ROBOTICS TEAM

(Mr. BAIRD of Indiana was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor McCutcheon High School's Mavericks Robotics team, which won the 2025 FIRST Robotics Competition World Championship.

The Mavericks Robotics team competed against 3,700 teams from around the world just to clinch a spot in the world championship. Only 600 of those teams made the cut, and this robotics team won it all.

These talented students from McCutcheon High School dedicated 17 to 20 hours a week designing, building, and marketing their robot. Each of the students on the Mavericks Robotics team played a vital role in their global victory, from designing aspects of the robot, computer programming, crafting the physical build of the robot, or helping raise money for the project. These brilliant students should be proud of this truly outstanding accomplishment.

I congratulate the world champion McCutcheon Mavericks Robotics team.

RECOGNIZING SERGEANT RODNEY JENKINS

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Sergeant Rodney Jenkins, a dedicated public servant who devoted over two decades to law enforcement in Montgomery County, Indiana.

At 19, Rodney became one of the first full-time male dispatchers at the Montgomery County Communications Center, and his career only flourished from there.

In 1998, Rodney Jenkins was hired as a jail officer and reserve deputy with Montgomery County Sheriff's office.

In 2000, he was hired as a road deputy, and 9 years later, he was promoted to sergeant.

His leadership, coupled with his dedication to both administrative and field duties, showcases his true passion for law enforcement and community service.

We are grateful for Sergeant Jenkins' exceptional service to our community, and I am proud to congratulate him on his well-deserved retirement.

RETIREMENT OF DR. KAREN PLAUT

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Karen Plaut, the executive vice president for research at Purdue University who recently announced she will retire on June 30 of this year.

Dr. Plaut has a truly impressive career. Dr. Plaut attended the University of Vermont, received her master's from Pennsylvania State University, and received her Ph.D. in animal science from Cornell University. She held a fellowship at the National Cancer Institute at NIH and led breast cancer research at the University of Vermont.

Dr. Plaut then joined NASA and served as the lead scientist for the International Space Station Biological Research Project, working with engineers to build life science habitats for zero gravity.

Dr. Plaut joined Purdue University in 2010 and became executive vice president in 2023.

I wish Dr. Plaut the best of luck and congratulate her on her well-earned retirement.

RECOGNIZING DR. JOHN SCAMAHORN

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor fellow Boilermaker Dr. John Scamahorn.

Dr. Scamahorn earned his degree in veterinary medicine from Purdue University in 1972 and has spent his career supporting veterinarians at the local, State, and national levels.

Dr. Scamahorn runs the Animal Medical Clinic in Greencastle, Indiana. He also helped found the Indiana Animal Health Foundation, which helps fund scholarships and service animals. He also has contributed significant time to 4-H members.

He received the Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine's Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2001 and the American Veterinary Medical Association Meritorious Service Award in 2022, which recognizes a veterinarian who has brought honor and distinction to the veterinary profession.

Indiana is proud to be the home for Dr. Scamahorn, and I thank him for his exceptional service to veterinarians and our communities.

RECOGNIZING JINSIE BINGHAM

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jinsie Bingham, a trailblazing broadcaster and lifelong Greencastle, Indiana, resident. She even graduated from DePauw University, located in Greencastle, in 1956. Her broadcasting career started when she joined the local radio station WJNZ, formerly known as WXTA, as the sales manager in 1969.

In 1977, Jinsie Bingham became the first woman in Indiana to own and operate a commercial radio station. She ran WJNZ, which is now known as WREB and serves Greencastle to this day. In 1996, she received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Indiana Chapter of American Women in Radio and Television.

Jinsie Bingham retired from broadcasting in 1994 but continues to be active in the Greencastle community to this day. She is also known as the unofficial historian for the area.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to know Jinsie Bingham, and I thank her for her decades of service to Greencastle.

NIH CUTS AFFECTING CANCER PATIENTS

(Mr. CASTEN of Illinois was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, I got a call from a constituent whose 46-year-old son had just