

commitment to the community. They made sure that their windfall was distributed to nonprofits and to the community. They lifted everyone up.

Al and Carmen won the lottery in many ways. They created a wonderful family. Their children, now adults, have the same commitment to public service that they had.

We will miss Al, just as we miss Carmen. I am so grateful to my colleague, Mr. LICCARDO, for organizing this tribute here on the floor today.

Al and Carmen left a tremendous mark for good in our community. I will miss Al tremendously.

□ 1015

PUBLIC LANDS MANAGEMENT

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

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the important issue of public lands management.

My district is very blessed. From the iconic landscapes of Death Valley to the ski areas of the High Sierras and the wonder of Lake Tahoe, we host and steward some of the most magnificent places in the entire country.

Across millions of acres of public land, seven national forests, and countless parks, these wild places are the source of clean water and air for much of the State, while providing jobs for nearly 545,000 Californians and essential tax revenue for our communities and, of course, recreational opportunities for millions of visitors every year.

That is why it is so important that any decisions made regarding the acquisition or disposition of these lands be made only after significant and meaningful local input.

The communities most affected by our decisions must be willing partners in any plans made by the Federal Government. Local buy-in is the key to preserving these spaces and guaranteeing that our policies benefit the people that we represent.

For that reason, I urge my colleagues to oppose any plan that would supersede the will of our local communities and reject efforts to force land decisions without prior consultation.

CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, in California, we have just learned that CARB, the California Air Resources Board, is plowing ahead with the imposition of its new so-called low-carbon fuel standard to take effect in July.

The board has refused to even say what impact this is going to have on gas prices, but studies have shown that it could increase gas prices in California by another 85 cents per gallon.

Let's just consider where we are right now. In California, the price of gas is nearly \$5 a gallon. People get photos from their friends who are on vacation in other States, showing \$2.50 or something like that. They simply can't believe it.

By far, California already has the highest gas prices in the country. Second place is Hawaii, an island State, where gas is 39 cents cheaper.

Not only that, the current price does not account for the fact that two refineries have recently announced that they are closing, significantly reducing the refining capacity in our State.

A study out of USC estimated that this could increase the price of gas to \$8 per gallon by the end of next year, and then we layer on top of that this new so-called low carbon fuel standard. It won't be long before we are paying \$9 a gallon for gas or maybe \$10 a gallon for gas in California, which is something our constituents simply cannot afford.

It is one of the major reasons why the cost of living in our State has spiraled out of control. It is one of the major reasons why California has the highest real poverty rate of any State in the country. It is one of the major reasons why California has led the Nation in domestic out-migration for 5 years in a row, according to U-Haul's own rankings because folks simply cannot afford to live in our State.

I am calling on Governor Newsom and the legislature to stop the imposition of this latest punishment for California drivers, which could increase the cost of gas 85 cents a gallon.

I am also calling on the Governor and the legislature to revisit our State's gas tax, the highest in the Nation. I ask him to revisit onerous regulations like cap-and-trade and to revisit all of the other regulations involving the fuel mix and all of the other things that have demonstrably increased the price of gas in our State.

Mr. Speaker, Californians are ready for common sense. They are ready for some sanity to return. They simply are tired of having to pay far more for basic commodities than any place else in the country.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

(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 sound the alarm on President Trump's reckless efforts to kneecap the agencies responsible for our Nation's emergency preparedness.

In recent weeks, deadly tornadoes have torn through Kentucky and Missouri, leaving behind devastation, heartbreak, and lives lost. My prayers continue to be with the families mourning the unimaginable and with the first responders who selflessly ran toward danger to save others.

The Federal Government should be offering more than thoughts and prayers to the families facing immense calamity. Instead, the Trump administration is dismantling the very systems designed to protect the American people when disaster strikes.

At the height of tornado season and with hurricane season fast approach-

ing, President Trump has made the unconscionable decision to weaken emergency preparedness at the Federal level.

This administration has slashed employment levels for the National Weather Service, firing researchers and forecasters who track and monitor natural disasters. At FEMA, they have gutted the workforce, canceled critical mitigation and preparedness grant programs, and initiated reckless plans to undermine critical emergency infrastructure.

President Trump even fired his own personnel in charge of FEMA for admitting that it is not in the best interests of the American people to eliminate the agency. These cuts threaten lives.

Natural disasters impact all Americans and are not bound by the political whims of Washington. Whether it is a tornado in the Midwest, a hurricane battering the Southeast, or a blizzard sweeping across western New York, preparedness saves lives.

Every early warning, every rapid deployment, and every ounce of emergency management coordination is the result of decades of investment in the public interest and science. Under this administration, diligence has been replaced with disregard.

The hard-earned trust between government and community is being shredded by this administration. As ranking member of the Emergency Management and Technology Subcommittee, I have heard firsthand from experts who are ringing the alarm. These public servants are asking for the basics: Adequate staffing, stable funding, modernized tools, and the freedom to do their jobs without political interference.

It is a disgrace that the President is undermining the very professions they have dedicated their entire lives to. This is not a partisan issue. This is an American issue.

If the Republican majority in Congress allow this administration to dismantle the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, defund the National Weather Service, and hollow out FEMA, then they are failing every family that depends on those agencies to survive the next natural disaster.

The people sent us here to protect them and to ensure their security and safety. That means investing in the systems that stand between them and disaster. We must not sit idly by while this administration gambles with American lives.

Americans deserve better, and I know I and the Democratic Caucus will continue to fight every single day to make sure that they get it.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF TIM PENNY

(Mr. FINSTAD of Minnesota was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Tim

Penny, a friend and a leader in southern Minnesota who is retiring from 18 years as president and CEO of the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation.

Tim Penny first stepped into public service 49 years ago when he was elected to the Minnesota State Senate in his early twenties. From there, he would go on to serve in this very Chamber as the U.S. Representative for southeastern Minnesota, part of the district that I am honored to represent today.

Whether in or out of elected office, Tim has been a fixture in our State for decades, fiercely advocating for the region's economic growth, rural development, and community revitalization.

In his nearly 20 years leading SMIF, the organization has launched several grant projects, educational programs, and community improvement initiatives. His departure leaves behind enormous shoes to fill but also a legacy of service. It is a legacy of service that will long be remembered by all of us in southern Minnesota.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Tim on his well-deserved retirement and wish him and Sandy the best in this next chapter.

PROTECTING SOUTH FLORIDA

(Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK of Florida was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, today Republicans are jamming through a reckless bill that would wreak havoc on south Florida. In response, I introduced a series of commonsense amendments to protect American families.

Over the past few weeks, multiple hospitals, including several children's hospitals, have come into my office and pleaded with me to stop the devastating Medicaid cuts.

One children's hospital, in particular, showed me their net operating margins for 2024. They were in the negative. This bill will close them down and deprive more than 80,000 children of life-saving care.

This bill also threatens the integrity of this lifeline program, while giving tax breaks to the wealthy and well-connected and leaving our children sicker, poorer, and without healthcare.

I am offering an amendment to protect Florida's ability to fund Medicaid. I refuse to stay quiet and silent while this body attempts to rip away healthcare from our most vulnerable children who need it.

I also introduced another amendment to protect south Florida's small businesses and the workers they depend on. Immigrants are the economic engine of south Florida. Their hard work and ingenuity make the region a desirable travel destination that thousands of people flock to each year.

Unfortunately, this tax-breaks-for-billionaires bill threatens to upend the district's economy, shutter small busi-

nesses, and disrupt south Florida's tourist industry.

As it is currently written, this bill would impose excessive fees on employment authorizations sought by asylum seekers and individuals holding temporary protective status to work in the United States. At a time of unprecedented worker shortages for south Florida businesses, Congress should make it easier for companies to hire and not more difficult.

My amendment caps employment authorization fees at \$550 for asylum seekers and TPS holders. It is a commonsense change that would give south Florida businesses the flexibility they need to keep moving and to keep thriving.

I also have an amendment that strikes the visa fee for this bill. Imposing a fee on tourists at a time when U.S. tourism is experiencing instability and unprecedented lows because of reckless trade wars would be catastrophic to our economy.

Furthermore, my amendment eliminates the cruel remittance tax that will exacerbate crises in places like Haiti, Venezuela, and African countries that depend on them. Taxing this lifeline will only bring more economic instability to the Caribbean and result in increased migration to the United States.

Mr. Speaker, remittances should not be taxed but should be incentivized. I will continue to fight relentlessly to protect south Florida from this reckless bill.

□ 1030

ALS AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. FEENSTRA of Iowa was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. FEENSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize ALS Awareness Month, to honor those who have lost their lives to this awful disease and to share my support for our fellow Americans living with ALS.

Last year, I had the opportunity to meet with Lori Hermstad from Spencer, Iowa, who tragically lost both of her daughters to ALS.

At just 17 and 26 years old, Alex and Jaci Hermstad had their lives cut short by this horrible disease.

They sadly became the youngest twin girls in history to lose their lives to FUS-ALS, an even rarer form of this disease.

Lori's resilience in the face of unthinkable loss is inspiring, and she shared with me the positive memories that she had of her brave daughters.

Jaci and Alex embraced life with remarkable strength, fearless hearts, and endless courage. They loved their families, friends, and faith, and they shared a passion for the outdoors and horses.

Jaci and Alex's bravery in the face of overwhelming odds are helping to advance science in the ALS community today. Alex's brain tissue was donated

to advance ALS research, and Jaci personally urged lawmakers and the FDA to fast-track a new personalized drug designed specifically for her rare and aggressive form of ALS.

These sisters showed us what it means to be courageous, to live with purpose, and to never stop fighting for others.

In the darkest moments, they were beacons of light.

In honor of Alex and Jaci, and every American living with or who has lost their life to ALS, we must recommit our efforts to find new cures and therapies for ALS.

We will never forget Alex and Jaci, and we will continue to fight to find a cure for this tragic disease.

CONGRATULATING DR. WENDY WINTERSTEEN

Mr. FEENSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friend, Dr. Wendy Wintersteen, on announcing her retirement as president of Iowa State University.

Under her leadership, President Wintersteen prioritized students, led the State in research, and advanced Iowa State's incredible reputation. I have always enjoyed working with her to advance Iowa State's priorities at the Federal level.

We also worked closely on protecting CIRAS to grow manufacturing in Iowa and to bring jobs to our rural communities. She played a pivotal role in supporting our veterinary diagnostic lab and the world-renowned Ames Laboratory. She will continue to be remembered as a phenomenal leader for our Iowa State University.

Mr. Speaker, I wish President Wintersteen and her husband, Robert, all the best in this next chapter of life.

CONGRATULATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS ACROSS IOWA

Mr. FEENSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate high school seniors across Iowa who are graduating. This is an incredible milestone in their life that they will always remember. It marks the conclusion of 4 years of hard work, perseverance, and personal growth.

Whether they are off to a trade school, community college, a 4-year university, or heading straight into the workforce, their contributions to our communities are crucial, and their voices are needed.

They are the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators who will make our State and country a better place.

I especially want to congratulate my daughter, Savannah, who graduated yesterday and will be attending Iowa State University this fall.

Savannah's mom and I are so proud of her accomplishments, and I can't wait to see her future.

I congratulate the class of 2025. Now go chase your dreams.

BUDGET CUTS WILL HARM FAMILIES

(Ms. TLAIB of Michigan was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)