

This award is presented annually to a student who demonstrates exceptional leadership, embodies their organization's values, and positively impacts student life on campus.

As president of the Interfraternity Council during the 2024-2025 academic year, he played an essential role in advancing Greek life and fostering collaboration among Greek organizations. Robert is an outstanding young man who has consistently excelled in all of the mentioned areas.

I congratulate Robert on this remarkable achievement. I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING NICHOLAS PAPPAS

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Nicholas Pappas, a distinguished gentleman who devoted more than 30 years to the restaurant scene in Savannah, Georgia.

As a longtime owner of the Olympia Cafe, he united locals and tourists with his cherished recipes, exceptional culinary skills, and warm personality. Under his leadership, the restaurant gained significant acclaim, being ranked in the top 10 percent of restaurants worldwide by Tripadvisor in 2024.

Mr. Pappas was more than just a restaurant owner. He was a loving father and a grandfather, a mentor and a role model, and an exemplary civil servant. His legacy will live on through Olympia Cafe, where countless memories and joy were brought to many. He set a superb example for others to follow through his welcoming manner and unwavering work ethic.

Today, we celebrate Nicholas Pappas' life. The community is strengthened in the one-of-a-kind service that he provided to the people of Savannah.

BACKLOG IN IRS

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

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, imagine if someone owes you money and they said they would pay you back immediately, but they take weeks, months, and then years to do so.

That is what is going on right now with our Federal Government. The IRS has a backlog of tax refunds that is costing the American people a lot of money. Instead of fixing the backlog and rooting out waste and fraud, this administration is defunding the IRS and firing tax experts. They are opening the door for more waste, fraud, and abuse, not less.

This doesn't save money. Instead, we will lose out on \$159 billion on tax revenue, and the impacts are just hypothetical. I am hearing from constituents all over my district who are tangibly impacted by this backlog and by what is going on at the IRS.

Take a small business in my district who filed for a tax refund. They are owed tens of thousands of dollars, money that is critical to running and growing their business, and now they

can't make new investments because they are waiting for their refund. There is another family whose refund has taken years now, and they continue to see delays in getting their money back.

Defunding the IRS will only make those delays worse, and firing the tax watchdogs who prevent corruption will help big corporations dodge taxes left and right.

DOGE is enabling tax fraud, and making it harder to hold corporations more accountable. If my colleagues want to save taxpayer money, how about we fix the IRS, not dismantle it. This will save more money than DOGE ever would.

RUSSELL VOUGHT AND DOGE

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, many people think after Elon Musk left his post and is taking shots at the administration that DOGE is over, but that is simply not true.

The real architect of DOGE is Russell Vought. Vought is the co-author of Project 2025, the memo that President Trump said he has nothing to do with during the campaign trail.

Vought currently heads the Office of Management and Budget and said himself that he wants to traumatize the Federal workforce. He said: "... we want them to not want to go to work ... We want their funding to be shut down ... We want to put them in trauma."

This includes firing hard-to-replace civil servants, scientists, and meteorologists; and intimidating and harassing those who remain in hopes of driving them out of the Federal Government, despite their expertise that we need to keep our country safe and prosperous.

Let's be clear. This is not about making government more efficient. In fact, they want to replace many of these jobs with loyalists, even setting up loyalty tests. They are driving a brain drain in our Federal Government by choosing loyalty to the President over merit and competence, creating less efficiency and more waste, fraud, and abuse, and opportunities for corruption.

Essentially, we have to stop this. Make no mistake, I will fight this every step of the way.

CELEBRATING STATION 7

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the new fire station that just opened off of Route 50, Station 7.

This new 23,000-square-foot facility is replacing the previous fire station that was built in 1971 and will provide crucial, lifesaving services to over 6,000 residents, covering over 40,000 square miles of response area.

Station 7 will be staffed around the clock by career and volunteer firefighters and respond to calls of all types, medical, fire, and even wildland support.

The work that these first responders do is critical, and they keep all of us healthy, safe, and protected; putting

their lives on the line for the benefit of the community.

As a former volunteer firefighter myself, I thank the crews operating out of the new Aldie Fire Station for their service and dedication to our community.

EFFECTS OF BIG, UGLY BILL ON VIRGINIANS

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, the big, ugly bill the House passed is actually far worse than we thought for Virginians.

A new report shows that the red tape this bill adds to Medicaid eligibility could leave over 400,000 people in Virginia uninsured. That will lead to full ERs, long wait times, and higher insurance premiums for all Virginians.

The bill also continues the attack on Virginia's Federal workforce by undermining benefits for contractors, veterans, and longtime civil servants.

And while Virginians are being squeezed by grocery prices because of tariffs, the cuts to SNAP in this bill will mean tens of thousands of kids and over 35,000 veterans could lose their access to affordable food. I don't think leaving children and veterans without food assistance is beautiful at all.

The truth is that this big, ugly bill is that it will bankrupt future generations by exploding the debt. It will hurt our economy in Virginia and leave kids and seniors without food and care.

CONGRATULATING McALLEN HIGH SCHOOL MARIACHI ORO

(Ms. DE LA CRUZ of Texas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. De la CRUZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate McAllen High School Mariachi Oro for winning their eighth Texas Association of Mariachi Educators State Championship and tenth consecutive UIL State Mariachi Festival Division 1 Sweepstakes.

At the start of this year, many of the musicians were brand new to the team, and they were seen as the underdogs to the competition. Through hard work, through dedication, and daily practices, they worked together to secure these highly competitive titles. Their vibrant performances capture the spirit of Tejano music and continues to impress audiences nationwide.

I am honored to have the students and directors here today to share the culture and the music of the Rio Grande Valley.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Mariachi Oro. Their community is so proud of their hard work, their talent, and their dedication.

ANTI-SEMITISM

(Ms. HOYLE of Oregon was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. HOYLE of OREGON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak about issues of great importance and concern to me and my constituents that are of utmost importance not just for national security but for the soul of our country.

Anti-Semitism is taking an unpredictable variety of forms and has deepened anxieties among many American Jews, and it has contributed to a sense that simply existing in public as a Jewish person is increasingly dangerous.

The number of anti-Semitic episodes in the United States in 2023, in the wake of the Hamas attack on Israel, was the highest ever recorded in a 1-year period, according to the Anti-Defamation League.

Dangerous words turn into dangerous actions, and Jewish communities simply do not feel safe or supported.

Two things can be true at the same time. The suffering in Gaza is absolutely horrific. The stories of the children in Gaza are the stories I grew up hearing because this is the history of my family, which is why I cannot be silent in the face of children and families being starved.

My family fled to this country in what here is known as the Potato Famine, but in Ireland is known as "An Gorta Mor," which is "The Great Hunger." There was plenty of food. It was a policy choice to starve the Irish.

This is what is happening in Gaza. Keeping food and medicine from women and children and elders is just wrong. Not for nothing, nobody starts a revolution on a full stomach.

Tens of thousands of civilians, mothers, children, and grandparents, have been killed or displaced. Entire neighborhoods have been reduced to rubble. Hospitals, schools, and places of worship lie in ruin.

The American people are watching in horror.

Let me be absolutely clear. Hamas' brutal October 7 attack was an atrocity. I condemn it fully and unequivocally. No cause justifies the murder of innocent people or the taking of hostages.

Israel has the right to defend itself, but what we are seeing now is not defense. It is devastation. Tens of thousands of Palestinians are dead, the majority of which are women and children.

This is not security. It is not peace. It is collective punishment, and it violates international law.

At the same time, I will say just as clearly, there is no place for anti-Semitism anywhere, ever, not in our communities, not in our political discourse, not in our movement for peace. We can and must condemn the horrors of war without feeding hatred. We can mourn Palestinian lives without denying the trauma of the Jewish people. Holding the Jewish community responsible for the actions of the Israeli government is anti-Semitic.

However, it is not anti-Semitic to speak out against what is happening in Gaza, and the U.S. is complicit in keeping food, water, and medicine from a starving and traumatized people.

The United States has a moral obligation to stand up for human rights, for international law, and for peace. That means we must press for an im-

mediate and lasting ceasefire. We must demand the release of all hostages.

This isn't about choosing sides. It is about choosing a future where Israelis and Palestinians can live in safety, dignity, and peace.

I have heard from thousands of my constituents: Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and secular, who are begging for us to lead with compassion and courage. This is a moral crossroads for our Nation, and history will remember whether we met the moment or shrank from it.

Mr. Speaker, let's work to end this war, bring the hostages home, end Hamas' reign of terror, and build a future where no parent, Israeli or Palestinian, has to bury a child because we failed to act.

RECOGNIZING DAVENPORT ASSUMPTION GIRLS' SOCCER TEAM

(Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS of Iowa was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary achievement of the Davenport Assumption girls' soccer team, who have once again made Iowa history.

With a 2-0 victory over the number one ranked Denver Cyclones, the Knights captured their record-setting 12th Iowa State Championship. This win marks their first title since 2021 and is a testament to the perseverance, heart, and teamwork that defines Iowa athletes.

Led by senior Dru Dorsey and freshman Ruby Stevens, the Knights showed skill, leadership, and grit on the field. Dorsey scored one goal and assisted on the other, setting the tone and sealing the win. From defense to offense, the entire squad played with unity and determination.

This moment is more than a victory. It is a legacy, and it speaks to what young women in sports can accomplish when they believe in each other, never give up, and have a level playing field.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Coach Elizabeth Maus, the players, and the entire Davenport Assumption community. They have made their sport, their school, and their State proud.

RECOGNIZING CARLA EYSINK

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor an exceptional Iowan, Carla Eysink, who retired after 29 years of service as the executive director of the Marion County Development Commission.

Carla was the very first to hold this role. For nearly three decades, she worked tirelessly to strengthen economic growth, support local businesses, and champion the people of Marion County. From launching the Business Retention and Expansion Program to the Best of Red Rock Awards and the Red Rock StartUP! pitch contest, Carla's leadership left a lasting mark.

What stands out most is her deep love for the people she worked with,

the partners across Iowa, and the local citizens who showed up, rolled up their sleeves, and believed in the future of their community.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Marion County, Iowa, and the U.S. House of Representatives, I thank Carla for her extraordinary service. Her legacy will continue to shape Marion County for years to come.

□ 1030

ANTI-SEMITISM HAS NO PLACE IN AMERICA

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with urgency and determination to address the alarming rise in anti-Semitic violence that is sweeping across our Nation.

In recent weeks, two young Israeli Embassy staffers, Yaron Lischinsky and Sarah Milgrim, were shot and killed outside the Capital Jewish Museum here in Washington, D.C., by a radical Hamas supporter shouting: "Free Palestine." These two young people were soon to be engaged. Their future was stolen in an instant.

In Colorado, a man attacked a peaceful march supporting Israeli hostages with a makeshift flamethrower, injuring eight innocent people, some who are in critical condition.

Across our college campuses, anti-Semitic incidents have surged by over 80 percent, with students facing threats, vandalism, and violence simply because of their identity or their support for Israel.

Enough is enough. That is why I am introducing the commission to study acts of anti-Semitism in the United States Act, a bipartisan effort to investigate these hateful acts, uncover their root causes, and deliver concrete recommendations to Congress, local communities, and the President on how we can prevent further violence.

This is not a partisan issue. It is, however, a moral imperative. No American should live in fear for their faith or their safety.

We must stand united in saying that anti-Semitism has no place on our campuses, no place in our streets, and no place in the future of this country. I am committed to ensuring that we act, not just speak, because the time to confront rising hate is now.

CELEBRATING U.S. ARMY'S 250TH BIRTHDAY

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States Army.

As a 24-year Army veteran who is married to a 30-year Army veteran, this moment hits close to home. For 2½ centuries, the Army has answered the call—not for glory but for country.

It is not just the history books or the battlefields that define the Army. It is the people. It is the young men and women from small towns and big cities who raise their hands, lace up their boots, and swear an oath to protect this Nation and its values.

I have seen what that sacrifice looks like. I have worn the uniform. I have served beside heroes, and I know what it means to be part of something bigger than yourself.