

Although I can't be there tomorrow, it is time to celebrate. Mr. Speaker, Thunder Up.

HONORING DR. SOLANGES VIVENS

(Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of Immigrant Heritage Month and Caribbean American Heritage Month, reminders of the courage of those who came to this Nation seeking freedom, safety, and opportunity.

As the proud daughter of Haitian immigrants, I carry the hopes of my parents and the legacy of the people who fought for dignity and justice.

Today, I honor Dr. Vivens, a Haitian American who rose from a non-English speaking factory worker to a nationally recognized healthcare executive and entrepreneur. Dr. Solanges Vivens reshaped the landscape of long-term care, providing that with unwavering faith, even the highest mountains can be moved with determination, persistence, and excellence.

Because of leaders like Dr. Vivens, we are reminded that diversity is our strength and that unity is our power. I am extremely proud to recognize Dr. Solanges Vivens and to have her today in the gallery with her family.

Let's honor the past and ensure everyone has a fair shot at the American Dream to do great things in our country and also to help all Americans achieve greatness. Thank you, Dr. Vivens, for all your service.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DOWNING). The Chair reminds Members that the rules do not allow references to persons in the gallery.

MEDICAID IS A LIFELINE

(Ms. GILLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GILLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise the alarm on Senate Republicans' plan to rip Medicaid from 1.5 million New Yorkers, including children, seniors, and veterans on Long Island.

Mr. Speaker, Medicaid is not a luxury. It is a lifeline. In Nassau County, one in four children depend on Medicaid for their healthcare, and two in three seniors in nursing homes are covered by Medicaid.

Slashing Medicaid means ripping healthcare from the youngest, the oldest, and the special needs communities, the most vulnerable members of our community.

Nonpartisan health policy experts, economists, and medical groups, including Healthcare Association of New York State, have already warned that the impact of gutting this program will be felt by all, including those with private insurance.

Every American can expect higher costs and reduced access to care.

Once again, we have been clearly warned: The Medicaid cuts in the budget bill will have devastating impacts on our healthcare system and on millions of Americans who depend on it.

I am committed to fighting against these dangerous attempts to attack Long Islanders' healthcare.

REMEMBERING KYLE BENJAMIN COLEMAN

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

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of Kyle Benjamin Coleman, a beloved son, brother, and student from Gainesville who tragically passed away this month. Only 19 years old, Kyle graduated from Battlefield High School and had just finished his first year at Morehouse College in Atlanta.

At home, Kyle was the former teen president of our local Jack and Jill chapter. At Morehouse, he participated in campus organizations, including the Morehouse Business Association and the Leadership Education and Development Certificate Program. His friends called him a light and incredibly bright. He certainly was.

I and so many in our community are sending prayers to his family and friends. May he rest in peace.

CONGRESS MUST REASSERT OUR CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise with grave concern for our Republic and the long-term safety of our people, our military, and U.S. assets, both domestically and abroad.

For our Nation's President to launch military force on a foreign nation without Congressional approval—Article I, Section 8—is a clear violation of the most important legal document of our country.

History brutally taught our country what asymmetrical warfare is after enduring 9/11 here at home.

Congress must reassert our constitutional authority before the American people are dragged into a very endless war by those whose radical acts of retribution will not cease.

This is a time to pay attention, to study history a little bit, and to abide by the Constitution of the United States.

HONORING ROBERT SHANAHAN, SR.

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

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Robert Shanahan, Sr., affectionately known as Bob, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, union man, and proud son of Illinois' working class.

Born May 2, 1956, in Chicago and 1 of 13 children raised by an ironworker father, Bob graduated from Lincoln-Way High School and spent the next 40 years serving as a Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen maintainer with Metra. His work was more than a job. It was a calling, keeping trains safe, protecting workers and travelers day in and day out.

Bob stood firmly for workers' rights, from his courageous stand during the 1979 Rock Island strike to his tenure as grievance committee member, trustee, and convention delegate. He believed that unions are essential to the American Dream and that every employee deserves dignity, a living wage, and safe working conditions.

Bob led by example: rising before dawn, always ready to work holidays or weekends, living his commitment to responsibility.

However, his greatest pride was his family: his loving wife, Susan; his children, Rob, Bridget, and Brian; and his fantastic grandchildren, Cameron, Rory, Logan, Morgan, Bernadette, and Susie.

As we honor Robert Shanahan, Sr., we celebrate a life rooted in safety, solidarity, love, and family. His legacy was built on hard work and quiet heroism. He saved lives, mentored workers, and uplifted his community. We continue to pray and thank God for his life. May his story remind us of the dignity of labor and the power of a life lived with purpose.

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STEALING OUR PUBLIC LANDS

(Ms. STANSBURY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, Republicans in the Senate are trying to steal our public lands.

Unsatisfied with stealing our healthcare and food out of the mouths of millions of children, they are now coming for our public lands, lands we fish, hunt, and camp on, lands that have been sacred to our Tribes since time immemorial, lands that are integral to our communities and our land grants, lands that have nurtured us and make us who we are as Americans.

We are here to say "no." This is a fight we can and must win.

To every American out there listening, call your Senator. We must save our public lands.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

RESTORE FUNDING FOR LIFESAVING FOOD AID

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

Mr. MAGAZINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the 22nd time to call on the Trump administration to restore funding for lifesaving food aid for malnourished children.

Today, I remind this Chamber that this is not just a moral issue. It is a national security issue. Lieutenant General John Bednarek said: "Anytime that we, the United States, depart an area that we used to be in, either with USAID . . . or other soft power initiatives, some foes, whether it is China, Russia, or North Korea" fills the gap.

The general is right. Food aid helps stabilize fragile regions. It keeps our adversaries from gaining ground and good will.

Plumpy'Nut, a product manufactured in my district in Rhode Island, is a lifesaving source of nutrition for starving children around the world. The Trump administration needs to honor its word and restore the funding for this and other lifesaving food aid before more lives are lost and before our adversaries gain more ground.

COMMEMORATING 160TH ANNIVERSARY OF JUNETEENTH

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Ms. McCLELLAN of Virginia was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order hour.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and pride that I rise today to anchor this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour. For the next 60 minutes, members of the CBC will have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people on an issue of great importance.

Today, we commemorate the 160th anniversary of Juneteenth. Juneteenth commemorates the date on June 19, 1865, when General Gordon Granger entered Galveston, Texas, and ordered the final enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation, which went into effect over 2 years earlier on January 1, 1863.

While many people think the Emancipation Proclamation ended slavery, it did not. The Emancipation Proclamation ended slavery in the States that were in rebellion during the Civil War, but slavery continued. Even in the States in rebellion, it continued for

over 2 years. It would take another 6 months, with the ratification of the 13th Amendment, for slavery to be abolished in America.

Virginia has the distinction of being the birthplace of American democracy and, a month later, the birthplace of American slavery. In Virginia, we love our commemorations, and 1619 was the year that what now is the Virginia General Assembly, the longest continuing representative legislature in the Western Hemisphere, began in Jamestown. It was the first time we had representative democracy in the British colonies.

A month later, the first recorded Africans arrived on the shores of Point Comfort at what is now Fort Monroe. It was 20-and-odd Africans who had been stolen from their home in Angola and then stolen again by a pirate ship, brought to Point Comfort, and traded for supplies.

That began the forced labor and servitude that would become chattel slavery in the American slave trade.

Virginia depended heavily on the slave trade. In my hometown of Richmond, which I represent right now, we had the largest slave trade market on the East Coast. Between 1775 and 1865, it was the number one source for enslaved African labor.

Over the break, I joined a commemoration of Juneteenth at the Manchester Dock. The Manchester Dock is the port where enslaved Africans were brought into Richmond. Many spent their time in what became known as the Devil's Half Acre, the notorious Lumpkin's Slave Jail. Many then made their way west.

Ironically, for my own family, we cannot trace the McClellan line beyond my great-grandfather, who we know was born in Montevallo, Alabama. Based on DNA evidence, we have reason to believe that his ancestors were enslaved people in Virginia. We can't prove it, but the DNA suggests that is the case.

Juneteenth reminds us that emancipation was not a moment. It was a movement. It was a movement that began in 1619 with acts of self-liberation, resistance, and rebellion that continued until December 1865, when slavery was finally abolished by the 13th Amendment, but freedom and justice for all was a continuing struggle.

We made progress. After the Civil War, during Reconstruction, with the advent of the Freedmen's Bureau, we saw formerly enslaved people, mostly men, gain for the first time social, political, and economic power. The Virginia Constitutional Convention, which allowed Virginia to be readmitted into the United States, had 22 Black men who served. During Reconstruction, over 100 Black men served in the Virginia General Assembly.

I didn't know that until I was an adult. I didn't know that until Yvonne Miller, the first Black woman elected to the Virginia General Assembly, first as a member of the house of delegates

and then the first Black woman elected to the State senate, as part of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus' annual tradition of telling untold stories during Black History Month, asked a researcher at legislative services who the first Black person elected to the general assembly was. We had all heard that Dr. Fergie Reid was the first elected since Reconstruction, but we didn't know who the first was.

Thanks to research done by the Library of Virginia, we discovered the over 100 Black men who served. I was proud, first as vice chair and then as chair of Virginia's Dr. Martin Luther King Memorial Commission, to uncover all of their stories, to pass legislation, and to put a plaque in the former capital of the Confederacy that lists all of their names.

I was proud to help build a monument to emancipation and freedom that told the stories, often untold, of Virginians who fought for emancipation and then who fought to make "liberty and justice for all" true for all Virginians.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, we made progress during Reconstruction. Then, it ended, and there was a backlash.

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Mr. Speaker, that backlash involved three things. It involved the propaganda, the lie of white supremacy that was intended to break up a growing coalition between formerly enslaved African Americans and poor, White individuals who came together to pass public policy in Virginia. The lie of white supremacy was designed to drive them apart.

It involved the propaganda of Confederate iconography such as statues to Robert E. Lee, even though General Lee himself said he did not believe such statues should be erected because they would pick at the wounds left from the war.

The backlash didn't end there. It included racial terror and violence. Thousands of people were lynched totally for the color of their skin. They were grabbed and accused vaguely of a crime, then they were hung, shot, or worse.

It didn't end there. Voter suppression included a wave of laws across the South that immediately responded to the 14th and 15th Amendment in an effort through literacy tests and poll taxes to keep those formerly enslaved people—men—who had gained the right to vote from exercising it.

These three things worked. For a generation the gains that were made during Reconstruction were erased. That history was not taught in school. I never learned that history in school.

Because my great-grandfather wrote a book, I knew about his literacy test that he had to take. I knew about the literacy test. When he went and took it and got all of the questions right, the registrar said he needed more questions because my great-grandfather was on a