

Above all, Jeff Wilson's character stands as a shining example of integrity and of gratitude. His faith in our Almighty God and his humility are shown in everything he does, always reminding us of how important it is to give back to our community and to our country.

I can personally attest to the genuine and forward-thinking spirit that Jeff brings to every opportunity. His leadership strengthens South Carolina agriculture, ensures the future of family farming, and honors the heritage that makes our State proud.

On behalf of the people of South Carolina, I thank Mr. Jeff Wilson for his extraordinary contributions to our State, to our city, to our county, and to our country. I pray this work continues to inspire young people to lead by his strong values.

We just had the tragic passing of a great American, Charlie Kirk, who extolled the values of faith, family, and freedom. Jeff Wilson extolls the values that Mr. Kirk extolled for 31 years of his life.

Godspeed.

#### PARTNERSHIP FOR L.A. SCHOOLS

(Mr. HOYER of Maryland was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, one of the most important and critical responsibilities any nation has, any community has, any State has, is the education of its children.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the extraordinary work of an organization from Los Angeles that has lessons for every community in America.

Nearly two decades ago, then-Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa partnered with my good friends, philanthropists Melanie and Richard Lundquist, to launch the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools. Dr. Lundquist is with us today.

Their nonprofit is committed to strengthening public schools in some of L.A.'s most underserved and challenging communities.

Today, under the leadership of Guadalupe Guerrero, the Partnership for L.A. Schools manages 20 K-12 public schools, serving more than 13,500 students in Boyle Heights, Watts, and South L.A.

These are not charter schools. They are neighborhood public schools working in close collaboration with the Los Angeles Unified School District.

The results speak for themselves.

When the partnership began, the high school graduation rate in its schools was just 36 percent. Today, that rate has risen to 92 percent.

The progress does not stop there. This year's partnership schools reached their highest math performance ever and matched their strongest literary results.

□ 1020

Following the pandemic, students demonstrated 3 consecutive years of

growth in math and 2 consecutive years of growth in reading.

Every partnership elementary school advanced in literacy, and nearly all of them advanced in math, as well. Black and emergent bilingual students, those who have historically faced the steepest barriers, made some of the strongest gains.

I had the opportunity to see this outstanding education model at work when I toured Santee High School, one of the partnership's campuses. I was impressed by the students and their learning progress. I was convinced then and am even more certain now that the partnership has created a scalable and sustainable model for schools nationally.

The partnership is not only a success for L.A. but an example for all of America. Their work demonstrates that when we invest in teacher coaching, leadership development, aligned systems of support, and other proven strategies, students make real and, importantly, lasting gains.

Many in our country have taken aim at public schools recently. The partnership is proof that our public schools can deliver for every child so long as we provide them with the right tools and, importantly, the resources. The partnership continues to prove that every day.

I commend the Partnership for L.A. Schools—its educators, students, and families—for showing our country a better path forward.

Dr. Lundquist has become a dear friend and an extraordinary shining example for us all. I recognize my friend, Melanie, who is with me here today, and the tens of thousands of children, teachers, and participants who have made this such a success.

Mr. Speaker, tens of thousands of children have seen brighter futures because of Melanie and her husband Richard's philanthropy, vision, and dedication to improving America's public schools.

My friend, the late congressman Bill Natcher, used to say: "As long as you take care of the health of your people and the education of your children, you'll continue to live in the strongest and best nation on earth."

Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what Melanie Lundquist and the partnership for LA Schools are doing.

And for that, they have my thanks and the gratitude of the American people.

#### RECOGNIZING THE SUAREZ-DELGADO FAMILY

(Mr. BACON of Nebraska was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Suarez-Delgado family from my district for Hispanic Heritage Month. Their story is one of resilience, devotion, and the pursuit of opportunity, one that reminds us of the enduring promise of the American Dream.

Father Jaime Suarez-Reyes, born in Mexico, visited Disneyland as a child,

and it lit a spark in his heart. He decided then and there that America would be his home. In 1981, he began raising a family with his wife, Patricia Delgado de Suarez, and set his dream in motion.

The path was anything but easy. The process of immigrating took 7 years of perseverance, paperwork, and determination. In 1990, Jaime was able to bring Patricia and their four children, Jaime Jr., Adrian, Lorena, and Paulina, to Omaha, Nebraska.

Life in America demanded courage and adjustment. The Suarez children entered school, learning English and embracing the culture of their new home. With the support of kind neighbors and welcoming friends, the family grew in confidence and faith in the promise of freedom and opportunity.

Jaime worked tirelessly to support his family. His early jobs included shifts in a meatpacking plant, cleaning offices, and selling cars at H&H Ford. As his English improved, new doors opened. He became a Realtor, an insurance agent, and a banker. Yet, his true calling was entrepreneurship.

Jaime ventured into the restaurant business and steadily expanded into other enterprises, building a foundation of a legacy that his children will carry forward.

Jaime's success was never about business. It was about service. Together with Patricia, he served Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, teaching pre-marriage classes. In 1995, they became ordained family life ministers.

Jaime volunteered in Millard Public Schools as a translator, mentor, and soccer coach. He helped Hispanic students attend national leadership conferences, ensuring that opportunity extended beyond his own family and to a broader community.

From Jaime's example of faith and sacrifice, the Suarez children forged remarkable paths of their own.

Son Jaime Jr., a Creighton Prep and UNO alumnus, stayed in Omaha to continue the family's entrepreneurial tradition. Today, he operates 13 restaurants and cofounded real estate development and construction companies with his brother Adrian. He serves on nonprofit boards, to include OneWorld Community Health. He has been appointed to the Nebraska Latino Commission and the Omaha Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission.

His brother Adrian also remained in Omaha. A graduate of Creighton Prep and Creighton University, Adrian currently runs the family business, managing more than 100 employees. He has served on the board of trustees of the Omaha Public Library.

Their sister Lorena, a graduate of Marian High School, the University of Rochester, and UNMC, became a surgeon specializing in oncology. Today, she serves as a faculty member at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Finally, Paulina chose a career in nursing. Now a registered nurse in Warren, Ohio, she and her husband run

two gyms and manage an office building that supports nonprofits.

The story of the Suarez-Delgado family reflects the best of the American spirit. From humble beginnings to professional achievements, their legacy is one of faith, family, and community. It is proof that the American Dream is alive, that it endures, and that the American Dream can be fulfilled through generations to come through resilience, devotion, hard work, a love of family, and faith.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Suarez-Delgado family for pursuing their American Dream.

#### RESPECT FOR SCIENCE AND PURSUIT OF TRUTH

(Ms. JOHNSON of Texas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about a topic that should transcend partisanship: respect for science and the pursuit of truth.

History shows us that when nations embrace science, they grow stronger. When they suppress it, they grow weaker and often less free.

Throughout our history, we have witnessed dictators and authoritarian leaders suppress science and knowledge because it threatened their rule.

In Nazi Germany, Jewish scientists were forced out of universities, and research was put under complete control of the government. The result was not only the loss of a generation of brilliant minds but a society in which truth itself was subjugated to government propaganda.

In Stalin's Soviet Union, biology was condemned as "bourgeois science." Researchers who insisted on facts rather than ideology were imprisoned, killed, or sent to work in slave labor.

Even as far back as Mao's Cultural Revolution, China dismantled academic institutions, silenced experts, and elevated loyalty over knowledge. Generations lost their chance at education, and the nation's progress was stunted.

Mr. Speaker, if we do not learn from our history, we are doomed to repeat it. We are witnessing the same pattern repeating in our own lifetime.

In Hungary, Viktor Orban has taken over universities, closed independent institutions, and forced academic programs to shut down when they contradict his political goals.

In Russia, Vladimir Putin has jailed scientists and censored research, all to preserve the illusion of control and strength.

What these regimes have in common is simple: They know that science, at its core, is a challenge to authoritarianism. Science is a search for truth. It cannot be dictated by politicians, so when science becomes an affront to the goals of authoritarian leaders, they attack it, suppress it, deny it, and replace it with propaganda and misinformation.

Here at home, Donald Trump is following the same playbook. He has mocked climate scientists, dismissed decades of evidence, even as Americans suffer record floods, droughts, and wildfires.

Donald Trump has undermined doctors and public health officials by putting the Nation's leading vaccine denier in charge of our public health. Trump has promoted unproven cures for diseases, cut billions in critical research funding, and dismantled advisory boards that create avenues for government to work with scientists to make good policy.

In his 2026 budget, Trump is proposing to eliminate funding for the Administration for Community Living, which supports older and disabled Americans; the Department of Health and Human Services' Prevention and Public Health Fund; the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Trust Fund; the Pediatric Brain Tumor Consortium, an association of 16 academic centers and children's hospitals dedicated to trials of novel treatments for pediatric brain cancer; and so much more.

We need to understand why this is happening and why Republicans in this Congress are supporting it. These attacks are not random. They are deliberate, and they prove a tendency by this President to emulate the authoritarians of the past and present.

Trump's goal is to erode trust in experts, replace facts with loyalty, and convince Americans that only one man and one government can be trusted to define what is right and what is wrong. When a leader can erase truth and rewrite reality, they can justify anything. They can jail opponents. They can seize power and ignore the judges and the rule of law. They undermine the very essence of democracy itself.

Mr. Speaker, science is not partisan. It is not our political enemy. It is a safeguard against lies and misinformation. When our Nation's top leaders attack it, they are not only rejecting evidence. They are rejecting accountability.

America has always been strongest when we embrace discovery and not denial. When we put researchers, innovators, and problem-solvers to work—from curing polio to sending humans to the Moon and leading breakthroughs in clean energy and technology—our greatness has always come from empowering science, not mocking it.

Trump and Republicans are working to gut these critical advancements. Their tactics echo the worst chapters of history, and they mirror the tactics of authoritarian regimes today. If we fail to call this out, we risk normalizing it.

I believe the American people know what is at stake. They know that progress, safety, and freedom depend on science and truth, and truth cannot be dictated from a bully pulpit.

□ 1030

Defending science means defending democracy. It is about making sure our children inherit a nation that values evidence over propaganda and freedom over fear.

We cannot let authoritarians' attack on truth take root here. We cannot let science become the casualty of politics because if we do, history shows us exactly where that road will lead.

#### REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF CHARLIE KIRK

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

Mr. MCGUIRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Charlie Kirk. The country is heartbroken. As everyone knows, Charlie Kirk was assassinated last week for his beliefs of faith, family, and freedom.

Words are not violence. Violence is violence, and based on a pattern from the radical left, the message is clear: Keep your different points of view to yourself or else. That is an attack on the most important founding principle of our country and that is our First Amendment freedom of speech.

We must stay strong. We must keep fighting to keep our conservative principles, our Christian principles, strong.

Mr. Speaker, Charlie Kirk was a devoted father and husband and a Christian who deeply loved our Nation. His amazing wife, Erika, has lost a husband, and two beautiful children will have to grow up without the guidance of their father. When asked how he would want to be remembered if he passed away, he said: I want to be remembered for my faith. That should be the most important thing.

Those celebrating his assassination and lying about his record, well, that is just disappointing and that is wrong.

Charlie believed civil dialogue could always prevail, standing for civil discourse over violence. His debate skills were second to none and he captured the hearts and minds of all Americans, especially young Americans across our country.

He courageously pushed back against radical leftist divisive ideologies that have eroded our national unity. Unfortunately, some in the media continue to misconstrue his message to be of hate, but he treated all human beings with dignity and respect.

Charlie's legacy on the world left a message that resonates with an entire generation, and it is only getting stronger. He was a devoted servant of our Savior Jesus Christ and it is best to live his teachings every day.

Later this week, I hope everyone in the House will join me in supporting the resolution honoring the life of Charlie Kirk. Charlie lived with courage, compassion, and conviction. He was a fierce defender of the American founding principles, such as limited government, individual responsibility,