

As mayor of New Rochelle, he led the city in revitalization projects, creating thousands of jobs and breathing new life into the downtown.

Over the last two decades as Westchester County clerk, Tim modernized the office in ways that have saved taxpayers millions of dollars, made local government more efficient, and improved services for countless families.

Beyond titles and offices, Tim has been a tireless advocate for affordable housing, open space, and community organizations throughout Westchester. His service leaves a lasting mark not just on New Rochelle but on all of Westchester County.

I thank Tim for his decades of dedication and his commitment to public service. He was a great colleague in government, and I congratulate him on his retirement. I wish him and his family continued health and happiness in the years ahead.

HONORING LIFE OF TERRY MARTIN HEKKER

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Terry Martin Hekker, who passed away in her home on October 20, just weeks before her 93rd birthday.

A Brooklyn native, Terry grew up with the lively spirit of two large Irish families. Her father's work brought the family to the Bear Mountain Inn, where Terry's earliest encounters included visiting athletes and politicians, like Jackie Robinson.

A graduate of Pratt Institute, Terry married and eventually settled in Nyack, New York, where she raised five children. Terry authored two best-selling novels, which brought her national recognition and led her to a long career in local politics.

Terry served on various boards, including the Nyack Chamber of Commerce and as village trustee, before making history as the first female mayor of the village of Nyack, one of her proudest achievements being advocating for the creation of the Nyack Community Center.

May God bless the memory of Terry Hekker and continue to comfort her family and friends during this time of loss. Our community will miss her.

HONORING LIFE OF JOHN FARLEY

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize John Farley of Pearl River, who passed away this summer at the age of 84.

John grew up in Rockland County. He served our Nation proudly in the United States Navy and built a career as a member of Steamfitters Local 638 in New York City. To those who knew him best, he was simply "Pop."

John had a quick wit, a love of sports, and a gift for coaching. More than that, he had a way of seeing the best in people and encouraging them to see it in themselves. That is the mark he left on his family, his friends, and his community.

John's legacy lives on in his children and grandchildren and in the many lives he touched in Pearl River and beyond. May his memory be a blessing,

and may we honor him by carrying forward the kindness and generosity he showed every day.

CELEBRATING REVEREND TROY DECOHEN'S 25TH YEAR OF PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

(Mr. LATIMER of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the celebration of the Reverend Troy DeCohen, senior pastor of the Mount Vernon Heights Congregational Church, in this year completing his 25th year of pastoral leadership.

Reverend DeCohen has a distinguished clerical career. He was called to the ministry in 1988, was active in churches in New Jersey and New York, and is now approaching his fourth decade.

He holds master's degrees from Fordham University and Mercy University, and he has shown a skill and achievement in dealing with real-world congregational problems: substance abuse issues, conflict resolution, homelessness, HIV and AIDS, and mental illness.

Complementing his pastoral service, he serves as director of housing operations for the Westchester County Department of Social Services. He has been recognized with awards by Governors, county executives, State and Federal legislators, and organizations across the spectrum.

Along with his wife, Reverend Viviana DeCohen, he has led his home congregation in worship, Bible study, and community outreach to those in need in the Mount Vernon and surrounding communities. He serves as president and chair of the United Black Clergy of Westchester County.

He is living Matthew 25's spiritual direction every day to show faith in the Lord by doing good for his people, including for the least of his brothers.

I congratulate Reverend DeCohen.

RAISING CONCERN FOR HUD CONTINUUM OF CARE PROGRAM

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great concern over recent changes to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Continuum of Care Program.

This program is one of the largest sources of resources, including 900 units of housing in my district, that is involved with funding to combat homelessness, especially for seniors, domestic violence victims, and people with disabilities. There are nearly 700 units of permanent housing involved in this program.

In 2024, Congress approved a 2-year funding cycle to promote greater program stability. However, last week, HUD announced a new funding competition with substantial changes that could delay funding awards for months. The announcement also slashes how much funding may be used for permanent housing.

Such drastic changes could result in a significant reduction in services, forcing local partners to cease operations and reexpose hundreds of my constituents to homelessness.

As this majority continues to pursue drastic cuts to affordable food and healthcare, it is critical that we protect access to housing.

I urge the administration to immediately reconsider this decision and prevent a new wave of homelessness across the counties of Westchester, the Bronx, and elsewhere.

FOCUSING ON RESULTS

(Mr. BAUMGARTNER of Washington was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, we are nearing 1 week since the end of the needless, 43-day-long Democrat government shutdown. That shutdown was a monumental waste of time that hurt a lot of people across the country.

I am grateful that the families in eastern Washington can now breathe easier knowing their paychecks, benefits, and livelihoods are no longer being used as political bargaining chips.

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The House passed three appropriations bills providing full-year funding for agriculture, the FDA, military construction, and the legislative branch.

I am especially proud that three priorities I fought for were included in the agriculture appropriations bill: \$1 million for Washington State University's ARS building project, \$2 million for NEW Health's Chewelah expansion and regional workforce center, and \$1 million for TriState Health's Family Medicine Residency program.

These are meaningful wins for eastern Washington families and our rural economy.

Our budget also delivered more than \$13 million for Fairchild Air Force Base, strengthening mission support and fueling operations to keep our Nation secure. Had the vote gone differently and the Democrats succeeded in pandering to their radical base, we might still be in a government shutdown and these critical victories for eastern Washington and the Nation might never have happened.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad we are getting back to what matters: delivering results for the people we serve.

HONORING VIETNAM VETERAN JOHN GILMAN

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, few moments as a Member of Congress are more meaningful than helping a hero receive long-overdue recognition. Recently, my office had the privilege of assisting Vietnam veteran John Gilman in securing the Silver Star Medal he earned more than 50 years ago, an honor long delayed but deeply deserved.

On Veterans Day, I had the privilege of meeting Mr. Gilman at the Heroes Awards night in Spokane. The event,

hosted by Heroes Homestead, was a remarkable celebration of service, honoring not only those who wore the uniform but those who continue to serve our communities today.

Surrounded by his family, friends, and fellow veterans, Mr. Gilman finally received the medal that reflected his courage and selflessness in Vietnam.

Mr. Gilman of Airway Heights served valiantly in the American Division during the 1969 Tet Offensive. Amid intense combat near Phuoc Hoa, South Vietnam, his company was ordered to relieve a friendly unit under fire. Though wounded in action, Mr. Gilman refused to fall back. He steadfastly manned his M60 machine gun and continued providing suppressive fire, even while receiving medical treatment. Thanks to his courage under fire, his unit closed with and ultimately destroyed the insurgent force. For these extraordinary acts, the Army approved Mr. Gilman for his Silver Star. Yet despite that honor, he was never officially presented the award.

Earlier this year, Mr. Gilman contacted my office. Through the persistent efforts of my staff working hand in hand with Army Personnel Command, we confirmed that his Silver Star had been authorized decades ago but never delivered.

Last Tuesday night, more than 50 years after his acts of valor, Brigadier General Paul Sellars, Commanding General of the Washington Army National Guard, had the honor of presenting the Silver Star to Mr. Gilman.

The Silver Star is the Army's third-highest award for gallantry in combat, given only to those who display extraordinary heroism under fire.

Mr. Gilman's story is a powerful reminder of the courage that defines our veterans and our Nation's sacred duty to ensure their service is never forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate John Gilman and thank him for his bravery, his sacrifice, and his continued example to us all. As we approach America's 250th birthday, let us honor veterans like John Gilman not only with medals but through our daily commitment to live up to the freedom they fought to defend.

HIGHER COSTS OF EVERYDAY LIFE

(Mrs. SYKES of Ohio was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, as families in Ohio's 13th Congressional District get ready for the holiday season, I will talk about something that is weighing on many of them.

The cost of everyday life keeps going up and people feel it every time they shop for groceries, pay their utility bills, fill up their gas tanks, or try to plan for the weeks ahead.

Across Ohio's 13th District, people are telling me the same thing: Their paychecks are not stretching the way they used to and they are working harder and getting less in return.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, food costs have increased nearly 3 percent over the past year and the cost of meat, poultry, fish, and coffee grew more than 5 percent.

The Department of Agriculture expects grocery prices to rise again this year. These cost increases amount to grocery bills that are hundreds of dollars higher for less food. This is compounded by the SNAP cuts in the one big, ugly bill and cuts to food banks all across this country.

However, it is not just food and groceries. Families are feeling the squeeze in multiple ways. Healthcare premiums, copays, and prescription costs have climbed, leaving families with difficult choices about their care. Energy bills from heating homes in winter to cooling them in summer are also rising, stretching budgets even further.

These are not small inconveniences. They shape every decision families make about what they can afford. As people question whether they can cover the basics, it affects how they plan their days, care for one another, and participate in their communities. Something as simple as sitting down together for a meal or planning a gathering can become harder to manage.

These costs do not rise in a vacuum. The decisions made here in Washington shape the choices people face at home. When policies put pressure on working families instead of supporting them, the impact shows up in higher bills and tighter budgets. A strong economy is one that gives families the confidence to meet their needs and build toward the future. It starts with people who feel secure enough to gather, share a meal, and look ahead with some peace of mind.

That is why I continue to fight for policies that put people first. I am working to lower healthcare costs. I am working to bring down everyday expenses, including energy, utilities, and food costs. I am committed to supporting the creation of good-paying jobs so families in Ohio's 13th District and all across the country can worry a little less and hope a lot more.

As we enter this holiday season, we should remember what keeps our communities strong: fairness, opportunity, and support for one another. Let us, as Members of Congress, make choices that help families meet their needs and stay connected.

CHAMPION OF THE WEEK: AARIT KOUL

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Aarit Koul as the champion of the week for Ohio's 13th Congressional District.

Aarit, a freshman at Jackson High School, recently won the 2025 National Civics Bee. He competed against finalists from 38 other States in five rounds, including one in which he presented a societal problem and offered his suggestions for solving it.

Aarit discussed the healthcare system in the United States, timely and appropriate, especially considering our current state of affairs.

With this win comes a \$100,000 college fund, which will go a long way to help him attend his dream school, Yale University. Aarit aspires to become a lawyer and ultimately land an appointment as a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time I have come to the floor to recognize Aarit's talents, nor is it the second. This is actually the third time Aarit has been recognized before this body.

In 2023, he was the Congressional App Challenge Winner for Ohio's 13th District when he was in middle school. His app, Care Civics, was designed to encourage young people to become civically engaged. He was inspired by his time studying for the Ohio Civics Bee, which he went on to win in 2024. Now, just a high school freshman, he has come out on top at the national level, and I could not be more proud.

Mr. Speaker, I also had the honor of first meeting Aarit at Jackson Memorial Middle School when he served as the Speaker of the Little Congress. Aarit is a shining example of why Ohio's 13th Congressional District is known as the birthplace of champions.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to all that he accomplishes in the future, and I thank Aarit for his dedication to civics in the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF OPERA ROANOKE

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

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Opera Roanoke on the momentous occasion of its 50th anniversary.

Founded in 1976 as the Southwest Virginia Opera Society by a group of dedicated volunteers, the company staged its first production of "The Consul" in 1978, and in 1991, became the fully professional organization we now know as Opera Roanoke.

For five decades, it has been a cornerstone of cultural life in Roanoke and across Virginia's Blue Ridge, presenting compelling performances and fostering a broader appreciation for opera in western Virginia.

Over the years, the company has benefited from remarkable artistic leadership and the guidance of legendary mentors, such as Eleanor Steber and Irene Dalis. A special thank you to the board of trustees, who have contributed to the success of the opera: John Johnson, President; Krista Vannoy, Immediate Past President; Frank Giannini, Treasurer; Jim Dubinsky, Secretary; Isabel Ditzel; and Eric Monday.

This anniversary season opened with "Love and Sacrifice: A tribute to the Heart of Opera Roanoke," which also marked the retirement of Maestro Steven White, whose more than 20 years of service have profoundly shaped the company's artistic excellence.

As Opera Roanoke looks ahead to its 50th anniversary season and upcoming