

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

production of "Hansel and Gretel," I congratulate the organization, its artists, its leadership, and its supporters on five decades of achievement. May the next 50 be just as inspiring.

CELEBRATING ROBERT HOLLAND'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Robert Holland of Roanoke, Virginia, who will celebrate his 100th birthday this Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 2025.

Mr. Holland is a proud World War II veteran who enlisted in the United States Army at just 18 years old. He spent his 19th birthday in France, serving as a Staff Sergeant with the 381st Battery. He worked as a powder man and also served in supply operations, roles vital to our mission's success in Europe.

After the war, Mr. Holland returned to his home State of West Virginia before settling in the Hollins area of Roanoke County in 1950 to be near family. He went on to enjoy a long and honorable career with the General Electric Company and has been a valued member of the Roanoke community ever since.

Mr. Speaker, as he marks a century of life, service, and devotion to family and country, I am proud to join his loved ones and neighbors in wishing Mr. Robert Holland a very happy 100th birthday and thanking him for his steadfast service to our Nation.

CONGRATULATING WARREN COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL FFA

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, for the first time in Warren County's history, a middle school FFA chapter has earned the highest honor possible from the National FFA Organization. Receiving the National Chapter Award with a gold three-star rating places Warren County Middle School's FFA among the very best agricultural education programs in the Nation.

A testament to the hard work, leadership, and community spirit of our students, these young people are not only learning about agriculture but also taking initiative to serve their neighbors, strengthen their school, and build a brighter future.

Led by adviser Lynne Phillips and officers Harlie Brooks, Madison Ballard, Bella Kaplan, Allie Englert, Camberlee Lockhart, Cadence Flint, Alexis Clark, Silas Dutton, and Lex Flores, alongside all other members, planned and carried out projects that range from food drives to environmental cleanups, demonstrating that middle school students, when given the tools and the trust, can rise to extraordinary heights.

Mr. Speaker, fewer than 10 percent of FFA chapters nationwide receive this distinction. Warren County's students have set a new standard of excellence, and they remind us that the seeds of leadership, once planted, can grow into something that lifts up an entire community. I am proud to honor them today.

DENOUNCING SOCIALISM IN AMERICA

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, socialism has left a long trail of suffering across

the globe. Wherever it has taken root, it has brought economic collapse, political oppression, and the deterioration of freedom.

Despite this record, we are seeing a troubling rise in socialist rhetoric here at home, especially among younger Americans and in major cities like New York City where these ideas are becoming increasingly mainstream. At the same time, support for the free-market principles that built our Nation has declined. This shift endangers the core values handed down by our Founding Fathers: liberty, personal responsibility, and limited government.

We cannot ignore these warning signs. We cannot allow the failures of socialist systems abroad or here in the United States to be rewritten, dismissed, or forgotten. That is why House Republicans are set to vote on a resolution that firmly rejects socialism in all its forms and reaffirms our commitment to the American ideals of freedom and self-governance.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve to know where their elected officials stand. House Republicans will choose freedom, and we will stand for the principles that are the foundation of this great Nation.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS HERE

(Ms. RIVAS of California was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. RIVAS. Mr. Speaker, we are at a unique moment in our history. A technology straight out of science fiction is now becoming an increasingly ubiquitous aspect of daily life.

Artificial intelligence is here, and it is reshaping nearly every aspect of modern life: how we work, how we learn, and how we communicate.

AI-generated content is becoming more prevalent in healthcare, housing, education, entertainment, and even public service. If we do not have a standardized plan to become proficient in AI literacy today, we will not be ready to handle the challenges that AI can pose in the future.

This is why I am introducing the AI for ALL Act. The AI for ALL Act develops a national strategy for the Federal Government to improve AI literacy in education. By understanding how AI has evolved and is expected to evolve, we can be better prepared to embrace the opportunities AI presents and address the challenges that can and will arise in the future.

As lawmakers, we have a duty to ensure emerging technologies like AI are used responsibly, safely, and effectively so it does not harm public safety or infringe on our rights. The AI for ALL Act allows us to fulfill those duties and ensure that the United States will continue to be a global leader in AI.

With strong AI literacy and education guidelines, we can lead with clarity, govern with integrity, and en-

sure the innovative breakthroughs AI brings can continue serving the public good.

BENJAMIN GUERRERO-CRUZ DETAINED BY ICE

Ms. RIVAS. Mr. Speaker, 3 months ago, I shared the story of Benjamin Guerrero-Cruz, a senior at Reseda High School, who was detained by ICE while walking his dog.

Benjamin is an older brother, a loving son, and a valued member of the community. He is a child. For the past 3 months, Benjamin has been in ICE detention at the Adelanto Detention Facility. ICE has been forcing his family to live a nightmare. Benjamin was transferred between two States and three detention facilities in 24 hours without his family knowing. If that was happening to Benjamin, imagine who else it is happening to.

That is why I introduced the INFORM Act. My bill holds ICE accountable for the nightmare they are forcing families like Benjamin's to live through.

Many immigrant families in my district do not know the whereabouts of their loved ones after they are detained by ICE. I have been urging ICE leadership to answer for their chaotic, inconsistent, and cruel decisionmaking policies that have torn apart families across the country. My bill respects the dignity of immigrant families and promotes government transparency.

I will continue showing up to detention facilities and working with my colleagues to hold ICE accountable, promote government transparency, and respect the dignity of immigrant families.

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HONORING SERGEANT WILLIAM HEIMANN

(Mr. MANN of Kansas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sergeant Scott William Heimann, a loyal husband, a devoted father, a beloved son, and an invaluable member of the Hays, Kansas, community. Scott paid the ultimate price, sacrificing his life for the community he loved and served.

On Sunday, September 28, 2025, Scott's watch ended far too soon. He was shot and killed while responding to a domestic violence call. On behalf of Kansans in the Big First District, I thank Scott for his service.

Scott served with the Hays Police Department for 9 years. Throughout his time, he served on the Special Situation Response Team, High-Tech Crime Unit, Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, and the Honor Guard.

Scott took pride in wearing the Hays Police Department uniform. He was never above serving the community he lived in, whether his task was reading books to students at the library or responding to the most dangerous threats that posed a risk to his neighbors. There was no task too big or too small in his eyes.