

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I have taken to the floor today to respond to Minority Leader HAKEEM JEFFRIES calling me a "stone-cold liar" during a press conference defending the recent discovery of Democrats' communication with convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

I bring with me something that he and many of his fellow Democrats—Democrats like JAMIE RASKIN, JASMINE CROCKETT, and STACEY PLASKETT—apparently detest, which is a thing called evidence.

Tuesday, I gave a speech on the House floor detailing my House Oversight Committee's good work to date on our Epstein investigation. After all, HAKEEM JEFFRIES, the Democrats in Congress, and their allies in the corporate media have been demanding a full release of the Epstein documents for months, including all the documents from the Epstein estate.

Without hesitation, I subpoenaed all of the Jeffrey Epstein estate documents because I, as well as my Republican colleagues on the House Oversight Committee, want to know what really happened. We want to know what went on and who was involved in these unspeakable crimes. We want justice for the survivors. That is why we are doing this investigation.

The House Oversight Committee obtained over 30,000 pages of documents from the estate. Unlike the Democrats, who only released 10 of those over 30,000 pages of documents, Republicans on the House Oversight Committee released every single document on the website for the American people to see.

Democrats and many in the media were anxiously clutching their pearls in anticipation of potential dirt on President Trump. In the end, after full transparency by the Republicans on the Oversight Committee, there was nothing new about the President's former relationship with Epstein and certainly nothing scandalous. We did find two sitting Democrat Members of Congress had communication with Epstein.

First, it has been highly reported and debated about Congresswoman STACEY PLASKETT texting during an Oversight Committee hearing with Jeffrey Epstein, while trying to conspire with him to hurt or embarrass Donald Trump. According to JAMIE RASKIN, that was okay because Mr. Epstein was her constituent. How embarrassing a rationale is that?

The second communication was this email right here where HAKEEM JEFFRIES' campaign reached out directly to Jeffrey Epstein, soliciting campaign dollars for the "Brooklyn Barack." Now, whereas JAMIE RASKIN explained PLASKETT's communication with Epstein as simply responding to a constituent, HAKEEM JEFFRIES had a very different response when asked about it by the media. He denied its existence. HAKEEM JEFFRIES said COMER is a stone-cold liar. Then he reverted to calling me names for the second week in a row.

Let's read it to make sure. It is to Jeffrey Epstein. That is the real Jeffrey Epstein, not JASMINE CROCKETT's Jeffrey Epstein. This is the real Jeffrey Epstein. It is from HAKEEM JEFFRIES' campaign.

Dear Jeffrey, we are thrilled that we are working with Congressman Hakeem Jeffries, one of the rising stars of the New York delegation, sometimes referred to as "Brooklyn's Barack." Hakeem is committed to electing a Democrat majority in 2014 and is encouraging his friends to participate in the DCCC fundraising dinner with President Obama and Hakeem Jeffries.

It ends with a number for Jeffrey Epstein to call to go to the dinner and "get an opportunity to get to know HAKEEM better."

Here is the evidence. The email speaks for itself. The only stone-cold liar in this debate is HAKEEM JEFFRIES.

Madam Speaker, I ask Mr. Minority Leader to take a deep breath, chill out, stop lying, stop with the juvenile name calling, and own up to the fact that his campaign solicited campaign cash from Jeffrey Epstein.

#### HONORING COURAGE AND SACRIFICE OF AZIZ REZAAEE

(Mr. RUIZ of California was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. RUIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the profound courage and sacrifice of a woman whose story embodies the enduring struggle for freedom and human dignity in Iran, a woman known simply and lovingly as Aziz, meaning "dear" or "beloved." Her full name is Aziz Rezaee, and she is a mother of resistance.

Aziz was born Zahra Norowzi in 1929 in Tehran. Like many mothers around the world, she married young, raised a large family, and worked to give her children a better future.

The tides of Iranian history pulled her family into the heart of political repression and terror. Aziz endured a heartbreak that no parent should ever face, which is the loss of nine members of her family: three sons, two daughters, and two sons-in-law. They were all killed across two successive dictatorships that feared the voices of those seeking democracy and basic rights. This happened first under the Shah and later under the clerical regime that replaced him.

Her children's only so-called crime was their involvement in Iran's democratic opposition movement, a movement that dared to say that the people of Iran deserved liberty, justice, and respect for human rights.

During the rule of the Shah, three of Aziz' children were imprisoned and tortured. One was killed in the street by secret police.

Aziz herself was arrested in 1975 and spent more than 3 years in prison. She was tortured. She was flogged. She was hung upside down. She was forced into solitary confinement. Yet, she never broke. The scars on the soles of her

feet remain today, living proof of the cruelty she endured for simply wanting freedom for her people.

Her son, Mehdi, only 19 years old when arrested, refused to bow to the torture inflicted on him. In a rare public trial before foreign journalists, he exposed the brutal acts of the regime and pledged his life to the poor and oppressed in Iran. That defiance cost him his life, but his voice continues to echo.

After the 1979 revolution, the Iranian people hoped for democracy. Instead, a new tyranny rose, one just as ruthless as the one before. The new regime once again targeted Aziz' family.

In 1982, her daughter, Azar, 6 months pregnant, and her husband were killed in a raid by the Revolutionary Guard. Aziz fled the country, forced into exile, where she continued her fight from abroad. Years later, more of her family members were executed.

Madam Speaker, how much can one mother bear? How many sacrifices must one family make for freedom? Despite the unimaginable loss, despite being denied the right to return home, Aziz has never surrendered her hope for a democratic and free Iran.

Today, in her nineties, living in a modest apartment on the outskirts of Paris, she remains steadfast. She continues to speak out. She continues to believe. She says: "The movement to liberate Iran hasn't died. It is strong. It is alive. We are marching forward."

Aziz Rezaee's story is not only about suffering. It is about endurance. It is about resilience and resistance. It is a testament to the unbreakable spirit of the Iranian people who continue to demand basic human rights and who risked everything, including their lives, to achieve them.

Madam Speaker, we stand here in the United States Congress, a place that symbolizes freedom and democratic voices. We must never take those values for granted. We must never turn our eyes away from those who fight for them around the world.

Today, I honor Aziz, a mother of resistance, and all Iranians who stand bravely against oppression. I stand with the Iranian people in their pursuit of democracy, equality, and human dignity. I reaffirm that the United States will always support the fundamental rights of people seeking freedom.

Madam Speaker, may Aziz' courage continue to inspire us like it has inspired me. May her sacrifices never be forgotten. May the day come soon when the people of Iran can live free in peace, justice, and democracy.

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#### HONORING GAYWARD HENDRY'S DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

(Mr. BEAN of Florida was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Madam Speaker, if you drive through Clay County in northeast Florida this time of year,

you might just catch the sweet scent of sugarcane drifting through the air. Follow that aroma, and you will likely find Gayward Hendry at the kettle, turning cane into syrup and neighbors into friends.

Today, Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Gayward Hendry for receiving the 2025 Distinguished Service Award from the Florida Farm Bureau, the highest honor for a lifetime of leadership in Florida agriculture.

Gayward's service has been extraordinary as a proud marine, a county commissioner, and the longtime president of the Clay County Farm Bureau. In every role, he has led with integrity, grit, and a deep love for the land.

He has mentored young farmers through 4-H, supported students through the Katy Hendry Memorial Scholarship, and welcomed generations of future leaders to his family farm to experience firsthand the traditions of Florida agriculture.

Madam Speaker, whether he is grinding cane or guiding the next generation through the challenges ahead, Gayward shows what it means to serve with purpose and to keep a community growing together.

Madam Speaker, with Gayward Hendry around, life is truly sweeter.

#### ECONOMIC DIGNITY FOR ALL

(Ms. TLAIB of Michigan was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, we know that our families can't afford the basics right now. Their electricity and gas bills are out of control. Their water bills are out of control. Don't get me started about their auto and home insurance. It is all out of control. Grocery costs are up 28 percent, healthcare costs are up and out of control, and it is even worse for those family members who are sick.

Our families can't afford the basics. Everyone in this Chamber can agree to that. There is an affordability crisis in our country, and the corporations and billionaires driving up these costs don't care. They not only don't care, they were also rewarded with a big tax break in the betrayal bill.

This is why it is important to understand that this is a policy choice, that many of our families feel like they are intentionally being put in survivor mode instead of being able to thrive.

I know that right now nearly one in five children in Michigan live below the poverty line, Madam Speaker, and 60 percent of Americans live paycheck to paycheck.

I am not going to wait for President Trump to keep his promise to address the cost of living in this country. I am going to help and push back and introduce the economic dignity for all agenda, a plan to tackle the high cost of living in our country.

We need to ensure that in every family in every single corner in our country, a child has resources that they

need to live and thrive in our country, not just hope to survive.

This plan includes the End Child Poverty Act, the Baby Bonus Act, and the BOOST Act. The End Child Poverty Act would provide a universal child benefit of \$458 per child per month. It would bring us closer to a nation where all children have the opportunity to flourish, not just grow. This plan will make it easy for our families to afford the basics. I hear it from them: Formula, diapers, and childcare are all out of control. It will provide, again, a long-overdue safety net for our families.

We know right now this bill, the End Child Poverty Act, is estimated to cut child poverty by 50 percent according to the People's Policy Project, and it will cut deep child poverty by 70 percent.

The second bill, a part of the plan, is the Baby Bonus Act, which would provide every family with \$2,000 upon the birth of their child, bringing economic stability to households through timely and flexible assistance at a pivotal moment for a child's development.

The birth of a new child is often a time of increased economic insecurity. Families face new expenses of childcare, diapers, baby clothes, and more, while many parents must take time off leading up to and following the birth of a newborn. Without universal childcare, parents are often forced to choose between healing, caring for their newborn, and keeping their job.

As a founder of the Congressional Mamas' Caucus, it is time we listened to mothers who are urging our government to focus on families.

Roughly 134,000 families are driven into poverty annually because of the cost of childcare alone. This is not surprising when countless families are one job loss, disability, and emergency away from crushing financial hardship.

Finally, part of the plan includes the BOOST Act. It is one of my district's favorites. It is the Building Our Opportunities to Survive and Thrive Act. It would provide \$250 per month to adults between the ages of 19 to 67 years old, promoting economic security for all.

Studies show that this is effective. What is not effective is continuing to give billionaires big tax breaks. Again, that doesn't impact our families in a positive way.

While costs for necessities like housing, groceries, healthcare, and education increase annually, wages fail to keep up. We all know this in this Chamber. It puts many of our families in economic insecurity. An unexpected expense like medical bills should not be a threat to a family's financial livelihood. It is important that we start looking at new ways. Regular cash assistance would make a tremendous difference to families literally on the edge of poverty and struggling to pay their bills.

Everyone in our country deserves human dignity.

We know that corporate greed is driving costs up and creating this af-

fordability crisis, so we need to push back. If my colleagues in Congress are serious and wanting to improve the lives of the American people, they should stop corporate giveaways and support and pass the economic dignity for all plan.

#### HONORING MARLENA PARKER

(Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a profoundly extraordinary American, Colonel Marlena Parker, a daughter of Bucks County, a trailblazing Air Force officer, and one of the finest examples of courage and character our Nation could ever hope to produce.

Just days ago, over Veterans Day weekend, I stood beside Colonel Parker in Plumstead Township, Pennsylvania, as our community gathered to honor her service. She was surrounded by the people she loved most and by the veterans she served alongside.

She was, as always, glowing, gracious, resolute, still lifting others up, and still inspiring everyone around her. Madam Speaker, sadly, it was our final tribute together. On November 17, Colonel Parker passed away after a brave and courageous fight against ALS.

She did not face a single day of that battle without the same strength, discipline, and warrior spirit she brought to every mission she ever flew. She never stopped living the values she instilled in others: faith, service, perseverance, and a quiet, unwavering resolve.

Colonel Marlena Parker was born in Doylestown on December 31, 1968. She was a proud first-generation Italian American and the daughter of Tony and Lena Ventresca. Faith and family were her foundation. Discipline and drive were her compass. At Gwynedd Mercy Academy, she was valedictorian. At the United States Air Force Academy, she was an NCAA All-American gymnast. From the very beginning, she was destined to soar.

After commissioning, she completed pilot training at Reese Air Force Base and went on to fly the KC-10 Extender, one of the Nation's most critical refueling and transport aircrafts that we have.

She deployed in support of Operations Southern Watch, Allied Force, Iraqi Freedom, and Enduring Freedom, carrying American power, American hope, and American strength across continents.

Madam Speaker, her resume reads like a history of American resolve, but her service was not only defined by what she achieved. It was also defined by the way she carried herself: with humility, with precision, and with an unshakeable sense of duty.

When the world changed on September 11, 2001, Marlena was airborne, and in the chaos of that morning when