

scheme where they were signing people up, getting the money, getting the government subsidies, those things, and the people had no idea they had insurance because they really didn't. They were just taking the money.

The system is absolutely screwed up and we have 38 percent disappearing in the insurance malaise.

This is what we have turned healthcare into. It is a financing. I beg of my brothers and sisters here, we have pieces of legislation, dozens of them, that would change the cost of healthcare.

When we think we may have spent \$25 to \$35 billion last year in duplicative MRIs, X-rays, CTs, ultrasounds, why not a simple piece of legislation that when you get your MRI, it is attached to this thing so it is portable to your next doctor.

Is that that scary? Except the lobbyists show up and say, DAVID, you don't understand. The duplicative scans are part of our profit model. Oh, I am not supposed to say that out loud. We have dozens of things like this.

We have turned healthcare into being about the money instead of our brothers and sisters living better, living healthier. Mr. Speaker, what if some of the money goes to the cures so we don't finance your misery, we finance your freedom from that misery?

I say these things and tomorrow morning there will be an army of lobbyists or an army of groups from my district saying, DAVID, you don't understand. We need the cash. Don't make us do it in a modern fashion.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to make the argument prosperity is moral. Curing people's misery is moral. Using the technology that makes you sovereign, that makes you free so you can help take care of your own health, is moral, and what we do here is absolutely immoral.

We don't tell the truth about the debt. We don't tell the truth about the demographics. We don't tell the truth about the damage we are doing to your retirement, my little kids' future. We don't tell the truth that if we would actually legalize technology—and I am serious about this—legalize it, how much healthier every American could be and we could crash the price of healthcare.

Will this go on deaf ears?

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1920

HONORING REVEREND FERNANDO SIABA

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mrs. RAMIREZ of Illinois was recognized for 30 minutes.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for all Members to have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order hour.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KNOTT). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I would like to start my Special Order hour by honoring someone who has been monumental in my life.

I rise today to honor the life and legacy of my pastor and friend, the one and only Reverend Fernando Siaba. It is hard to fully describe the impact that he had on my life and how much I will miss him blessing me with "God bless"; "Dios te bendiga."

Pastor Siaba lived a life that exemplified love for God and for his neighbors. I met Pastor Siaba at Humboldt Park United Methodist Church when I was just 15 years old. He invested heavily in my spiritual and professional development, both as my pastor and as board chair of Humboldt Park Social Services, now Center for Changing Lives, the organization that I had the honor to be the executive director for, for 9 years.

Mentoring leaders, particularly women of faith and leadership, was one of Pastor Siaba's greatest gifts. Over his impactful career, he served eight congregations. Even after his retirement, he continued serving by mentoring pastors, being registrar for the John Wesley Theological Institute, volunteering at a food pantry, and leading at Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church.

Pastor Siaba had a gift for thoughtful planning. He was so detail-oriented, humble, and truly the best listener.

In true Pastor Siaba fashion, he planned his own funeral, and he requested his eulogist preach on John 1:16: "From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace." While he may have defined his life by grace, we all benefited from the grace he extended to us. He wanted the best for all of us. He advocated for immigrants, people who were unhoused, and people who were struggling with substance abuse.

He truly lived a life of love and action. He taught us to love God, to serve our community, to seek justice, and to welcome our neighbors with open arms.

Today, on behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, that young person that he mentored, supported, and believed in has the greatest honor to commend him here on the House floor, in the House of Representatives, to commend the life of Reverend Fernando Siaba for his legacy of love, joy, and service.

I express my sincere condolences to his wife, Judy Siaba; his three daughters, Erika, Marta, and Ruth; and his entire beloved family.

May his memory be a blessing that sustains our fight for justice, and may he be welcomed in the company of saints and ancestors as a good and faithful servant. Mr. Speaker, may Pastor Siaba rest in peace.

HONORING MARISOL VELEZ

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to honor someone else. Today, I want to honor Marisol Velez, known as Pinqy Ring. She is a rooted, revolutionary Puerto Rican emcee from Chicago, decolonizing minds as a rapper, as an educator, as a mentor, and as a speaker.

As a cultural worker and disruptor, Pinqy's music ignites our imaginations and sustains our struggles against displacement and erasure.

As an educator and mentor, she shapes the next generation of creative changemakers through culturally rooted programming and radical care.

Pinqy is a GRAMMY U mentor. She sits on the National Advisory Board for Music Will and serves as a U.S. Hip-Hop Cultural Ambassador to facilitate cultural diplomacy programming and conflict transformation music. In her roles, she is shaping the first-ever K-12 hip-hop guidelines with the Hip-Hop Education Center.

On behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, it is my honor to commend Marisol Velez for helping young people find their truth unapologetically and share it creatively.

Now, here in the House of Representatives, her name will live on. I congratulate Pinqy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. UNDERWOOD).
OPERATION MIDWAY BLITZ CAN NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because what happened in Illinois during Operation Midway Blitz can never happen again.

The last time this Chamber convened before House Republicans took an 8-week vacation was September 19. This is the first chance that I have had to address the House about the outrageous abuses of power our community has endured for the past 2 months.

Under Kristi Noem's so-called leadership, Department of Homeland Security agents have terrorized my district. Their reckless and incompetent methods have traumatized families and endangered entire neighborhoods.

No community in America should live under siege by the Federal Government as mine has.

Federal immigration officers and National Guard personnel, weaponized and politicized by the Trump administration, swept into my district with no communication, no coordination, no transparency, no accountability, and no regard for public safety. They came barging into our towns, ignored our laws, and trampled on our civil and human rights.

In Aurora, a Federal agent pepper-sprayed a constituent of mine directly in the face from inches away while she was standing completely still with her hands at her sides, unarmed.

Elsewhere in my district, we heard reports that Federal officers used an elementary school as a staging area, positioning armed tactical teams on school grounds in full view of children.

Parents are afraid to leave their homes after hearing about neighbors abducted by masked agents while walking their kids to school, leaving the children unattended by the side of the road.

Workers fear going to their jobs. Our economy is suffering. Local businesses have seen foot traffic collapse.

Despite the Trump administration's claims of targeting "the worst of the worst," their immigration enforcement operations have been a chaotic mess, sweeping up U.S. citizens, legal immigrants, and people with no criminal record.

I was horrified when Federal agents rappelled down from helicopters to a Chicago apartment complex in the middle of the night, smashed windows and doors, threw flash-bang grenades, dragged children from their beds, and zip-tied and detained U.S. citizens for hours.

Yet, after all that, Federal prosecutors have not filed criminal charges against anyone detained that night.

In a recent court filing, DHS listed 614 people arrested as part of Operation Midway Blitz, and only 16 of them have criminal histories of any kind. That is 2.6 percent. The other 598 people have no criminal record.

What is happening in Illinois is called racial profiling. Greg Bovino, the Border Patrol agent who led Operation Midway Blitz, literally told a reporter that agents arrest people based on "how they look." Masked officers are violently targeting people, including U.S. citizens, because their brown skin and their black hair make them seem suspicious.

This is a complete failure. Our Founding Fathers warned us about this type of government overreach after seeing how a desperate King's troops could trample on our unalienable right to liberty. Yet, as we approach our Nation's 250th birthday, we are confronting a similar tyranny.

That is not all. Many of those arrests have essentially disappeared. Members of Congress could not get basic information from DHS about where they took our constituents. During the Republican shutdown, DHS leadership chose to furlough the liaisons that we rely on to locate detainees and resolve urgent casework.

When a constituent reached out because her husband was denied access to medical care in a detention facility, my office's emails bounced back and our calls went unanswered. Weeks later, I am still waiting for a response.

□ 1930

However, the shutdown didn't stop DHS agents from harassing citizens and using force on peaceful protesters, because the administration deemed those violent tactics essential. That was not an accident. That was a policy choice.

I say to my fellow Americans, this is not what legitimate law enforcement looks like. Operation Midway Blitz dis-

regarded Illinois State laws, Federal laws, and the U.S. Constitution. Due process, a foundational constitutional right for all people in this country, went out the window. Local police and officials were kept in the dark. People were snatched off the streets seemingly at random.

Many of my constituents felt like they were being hunted because of the language that they speak or the color of their skin, simply because they needed to run an errand at the hardware store or walk their kids to school.

This is not about public safety. When the President has the power to terrorize American communities for his political purposes, it makes us all less safe. It makes us all less free.

The people of Illinois deserve answers, and Americans deserve better.

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman UNDERWOOD for her hard work, her courage, her commitment, and for speaking truth to power in the people's House.

Mr. Speaker, when I look around at every single chair here, I think about the fact that Members of Congress, every one of us represents about 700,000 people, but together we represent every single person that lives in this country. That has got to be the greatest honor and privilege for anyone to be able to serve humanity in this way.

Therefore, it is important for me to think about the people's House, about the fact that we went 43 days without being in session. The Speaker put us into recess, and some of my colleagues were not even in their district. But here we are 43 days later, on the fourth day of this week of session, and as a reminder, I feel the necessity to remind my fellow Americans around the country and everyone watching what has happened here.

As a reminder, Republicans' big, ugly bill perpetrated the greatest transfer of wealth from working people to the ultra-wealthy in American history. I can tell you that when I visited food pantries in my district, I met people who said to me: Congresswoman, every single year I donate a thousand dollars to this food pantry, but here I am making a line, and I have been here for 3 hours. This is not the country and the promise that I thought the President made.

Here we are now. This week, instead of actually fixing healthcare, instead of passing legislation where we are actually strengthening the safety net for our constituents, instead of working together to build in the people's House, we are here filled with censures. And this week, Republicans are attacking more of the programs that our fellow Americans rely on, resolving that programs like Social Security, Medicare, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, and more are horrors.

Let's talk about the truth of the so-called Denouncing the Horrors of Socialism resolution that we are going to be voting on in a couple of hours in the morning. Republicans must despise you

and hate the idea of seeing our communities thrive.

Look, Republicans are quick to steal the programs and services you rely on to bail out the ultra-wealthy and big corporations, so we know that it is not the subsidies or supports that are the problem. Republicans champion socialism when it is benefiting the rich and the powerful who they think deserve it most. But when it comes to working families, then social programs are a nightmare because, bottom line, they do not believe you deserve the support.

Let me give you a few examples of social welfare programs that Americans rely on every single day whether they are in a Republican district or a Democratic district: SNAP benefits, VA benefits, local fire departments and police departments, the United States Postal Service, FEMA, public education, and the interstates that make commerce possible.

Listen, socialized programs are the foundation and safety net that ensures all members of our community can thrive regardless of our personal economic ability to pay into a capitalistic society.

Let's be very clear. I know, Mr. Speaker, you may not want to hear this, but it feels like hypocrisy. They want to give money to the elites while leaving nothing for everyday working families. It goes without saying that I will be voting "no" on this resolution.

I believe that our country must reprioritize and reconsider what we invest in. For me, that is working people. The ultra-rich don't need more subsidies. We are about to have a trillionaire that comes from this country, and they should finally be paying their fair share in taxes.

I believe that everyday, hardworking people deserve more and better. They have said this to you directly. They have said this to all of us directly.

I believe in universal healthcare—I do. I believe in free higher education—I do. And I believe social housing and pensions for all so that people don't have to work until they are 90, and they can retire with dignity. I also believe in a guaranteed minimum income, free public transit, and so much more.

You see, working families should be given every single thing they need to thrive. They shouldn't have to work 40 hours a week and still feel like they can't make it. We demand more. We demand a future that works for every working person. We can, in fact, build that together, but we can't do that if we destroy healthcare.

Since day one, the Trump administration and Republicans in Congress have been clear about the pain they are willing to inflict on the American people. You see, in only 11 months, Republicans have used their power to cut our healthcare, to close our hospitals, to raise our healthcare costs in order to make sure that billionaire bosses become richer.

It is open enrollment season, and working families are already seeing

double or triple the cost they usually pay for health insurance premiums. These are the very same people that have been telling you that they can barely afford their healthcare and to pay for their mortgage. In Illinois, many people will see their costs rise between \$3,000 to \$23,000, money that every family in our State should be able to keep to invest in their family's and community's quality of life.

Here is the bottom line: Costs keep increasing and people won't be able to afford their healthcare. Millions will go without the goods and services that they need, and the President wants us unhoused. He wants us foreclosed, he wants us poor, and it seems like he also wants us uninsured.

Look, I have already signed the discharge petition to ensure that the ACA subsidies extension is put on the floor for a vote because we need to use every single tool at our disposal to fight for our working families. I think it is time—it is past time—for Republicans to join Democrats in prioritizing working people and address the pain that our communities are enduring.

We should be demanding more, and it means that we could be using the discharge petition process. We have seen it work before this week, to release the Epstein files. We can do the same thing and get to the magic number of 218 Members of Congress who care more about their constituents than they care about a dictator, who care more about their constituents than they care about insurance companies, who care more about their constituents than they care about billionaires.

Here is the bottom line: We must demand more. Every Member of Congress who says they care about healthcare and working people—it doesn't matter if you are a Democrat or a Republican—needs to sign the discharge petition and take action on the rising cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, people keep saying, where does my money go? My taxes keep increasing. Where are they going? Well, Mr. Speaker, you and I both know where the money is going. Yes, it is going to Homeland Security, \$150 billion there so that the Secretary can cosplay and jump on those \$200 million jets. But it is also going to other parts of the world to pay for bombs.

□ 1940

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about a bill I introduced a few months ago. It is the Block the Bombs Act.

It must frustrate my colleagues, whether Democrat or Republican, that our government is using their money, their taxpayer dollars, so that someone else can use them in another country and bomb women and children.

I have been clear since the beginning of the ceasefire in Gaza and Israel that Netanyahu and Trump are a lethal, unaccountable duo that cannot be trusted. In the time since the most recent ceasefire agreement, the Netanyahu government has continued to bomb

Gaza, including refugee camps. It has restricted the movements of humanitarian aid, moved to annex the West Bank, and continued to arrest Palestinians without charge.

Mr. Speaker, this is all while Netanyahu continues to lobby the U.S. for more and more of our money so they can get more weapons unconditionally, which Trump is inclined to deliver as long as he can turn Gaza into the next Middle Eastern Riviera.

Today, on this House floor, we must say enough is enough. Congress must assert its oversight authority and withhold the weapons that are still being used right now, even in the midst of this so-called ceasefire, to violate U.S. and international law. That is why we must continue to demand that Congress pass the Block the Bombs Act as the first step in accountability and oversight.

Do not be fooled into thinking that blocking bombs is no longer necessary. The only thing that will actually affirm a permanent ceasefire is the oversight that this body gives. It is needed more than ever because every Member of Congress should join us today.

Mr. Speaker, as I prepare to close, I think about the moment we are living. I think about the children in schools who are wondering what the future will look like for them. I think about the responsibilities that we all took when we took an oath to protect the Constitution, to protect the well-being of our communities, to uphold the Constitution, and to honor our constituents.

I have to say that these last 11 months have been painful. As someone who lives in the city of Chicago, I never thought that I would say that I knew what it felt like to feel like I was living under siege. As a Chicagoan under the leadership of Kristi Noem, we have felt like we have lived under siege.

Mr. Speaker, I know firsthand what it feels like to have a Black Hawk helicopter surrounding my home every other day because they are getting someone else. They are arresting another mother in front of a school or tear-gassing someone else who is just recording.

I know firsthand the terror that DHS immigration raids have had on our communities. We have been surveilled. People have been threatened. A 1-year-old was teargassed. A U.S. citizen child was teargassed. A pastor was pepper-balled seven times. People were subjected to warrantless arrests, precision immobilization technique maneuvers, kidnapped and disappeared.

Neither Trump's administration nor DHS cares if a person is a U.S. citizen, a baby, a senior, or a pastor. There is no respect for the rule of law. Terror has been unleashed on American cities. They think that as long as they issue a statement with whatever fabricated lie that they have created that they can continue to get away with it. I want to give my colleagues three examples of what I am talking about.

Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, October 25, border patrol agents aggressively disrupted a children's Halloween parade and terrorized and injured a 67-year-old U.S. citizen. They pulled him out of his vehicle, tackled him to the ground, and detained him, arresting him.

On Saturday, November 8, ICE agents pepper-sprayed a family and their 1-year-old child as they were leaving Sam's Club. It was a 1-year-old girl. She was a baby.

On Friday, October 10, an unmarked vehicle, driven by Federal agents, crashed into Dayanne Figueroa's vehicle. They exited the vehicle with weapons drawn on her to forcibly drag her out of her car and arrest her. She is a U.S. citizen.

Here is my question to my colleagues in the people's House. If DHS cannot be held accountable, if we can't do our oversight work, if we are obstructed from conducting oversight, if they are systematically undermining our civil rights and perpetrating violence in our communities, then what is Congress' responsibility?

Mr. Speaker, let me say this: The answer is very clear. We must strip away every tool they are using to terrorize our communities. We can start with the taxpayer dollars they are using to harm Americans. It is time for us to begin defunding ICE.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

HIGHLIGHTING THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. KILEY of California was recognized for 30 minutes.)

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, this last month, Nevada County, indeed the entire State of California, lost one of its finest, its truly great citizens.

Eduardo Agullo Garcia was born in Barcelona, Spain, during the Spanish Civil War. He was the second child and only son of Jose and Esperanza. His favorite memory as a child was playing marbles in the streets, although he frequently returned home with an empty bag.

His life was forever changed when he applied and was accepted into the American Field Service program and became an exchange student in 1955. He sailed across the Atlantic with fellow students. They spent the time discussing American customs and culture.

It was on this ship that he was advised to avoid asking out girls who wore a pin because the pin indicated that they had been pinned by a boy and were not available to date. He traveled across the United States on his way to Millbrae, California, where he was hosted for the school year by the mayor of Millbrae, Webb Witmer.

When he arrived at the San Francisco airport, he was greeted by American AFS students including Nancy Campbell. While he was intrigued by Nancy,