

of Education to fulfill. Instead of fulfilling those legal responsibilities, Secretary McMahon decided to follow the Project 2025 playbook by outsourcing the work as part of the Trump agenda to abolish the Department of Education.

These actions will make it more difficult for local schools to get the funding they need. Now, they will have to navigate multiple Federal agencies instead of one. It is inefficient, unnecessary, and unpopular.

Poll after poll shows that the majority of parents support the Department of Education, and that is especially true with parents of students with disabilities. These parents know what is at stake if schools lose the Federal resources they rely on to educate every student, no matter their background or ability.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration has endangered these resources by intentionally burying them behind additional layers of red tape and bureaucracy.

There is a lot we could be doing to improve public education. To prepare future students, they need a well-rounded education that inspires critical thinking, confidence, communication, creativity, and a love of learning. Students need arts and music education, hands-on project-based lessons that teach teamwork, and a wide range of career and technical education classes. We must invest in, not cut, educational research, and we need to promote, rather than politicize, family, parental, and community engagement.

To fully learn and thrive, students need to have enough food to eat, and they deserve the best physical infrastructure in which to learn. They need access to behavioral healthcare, and they need to be safe and feel safe.

Unfortunately, right now, many students across the country are terrified to go to school because ICE is in their community. In Oregon, ICE agents are stalking school parking lots and school routes and detaining parents in front of their children. In one instance, ICE agents surrounded two high school students at a coffee shop and pointed rifles at them. This is beyond unacceptable.

Students as young as 9 years old know these actions are wrong. A fourth grade student gave me a handwritten letter, saying she is worried that ICE will take her friends away and that her friends will go home and their parents won't be there because they got deported. How is a student supposed to focus on learning if they are afraid that armed, masked agents are going to take their family and friends? These are children.

Unfortunately, House Republicans are taking their cues from Donald Trump, Stephen Miller, and others who do not grasp the damage they are causing to children as they try to close the Department of Education and slash education funding, food assistance, and health insurance but somehow manage to find and give \$170 billion to the De-

partment of Homeland Security to carry out an inhumane mass deportation agenda. It is tragic, and it is pathetic.

This administration has declared war on public education, but we are not backing down. We will not stop fighting against the dismantling of the Department of Education and the weaponization of immigration enforcement.

House Democrats understand how much better our country would be if we had a mass education plan instead of a mass deportation plan.

NATIONAL GUARD SHOOTING

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

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. Last Wednesday, the Nation witnessed a heartbreaking and senseless act of violence involving two members of our National Guard from West Virginia, Specialist Sarah Beckstrom and Staff Sergeant Andrew Wolfe.

Specialist Beckstrom gave her life in service to our country. She wore our Nation's uniform with honor, stood ready to defend her neighbors, and lived out the highest ideals of duty and sacrifice. We grieve her loss deeply, and I ask God to bring comfort and peace to her family, her loved ones, and entire National Guard community.

We also pray for the full and swift recovery of Staff Sergeant Wolfe. He remains in critical condition, and Americans across Kansas and the country continue to cover him in prayer. I ask for God's healing hand on him, for strength for his family, and for protection over every man and woman who serves.

Mr. Speaker, tragedies like this remind us that the cost of our freedom is not free. None of these men and women were drafted or forced to put on the uniform they wear. They boldly answered the call to serve in defense of our freedom and safety, and we are eternally grateful for the sacrifice that they and all the Armed Forces make every day in service to our country.

Tragedies like this shake us, but they also remind us just how precious life is, how quickly it can be taken, and how much we owe to those who step forward to serve.

This violence was senseless. It was wrong. Today, we pause not to debate, but to mourn, to honor, and to pray.

Mr. Speaker, let us remember Sarah Beckstrom's courage. Let us stand with Andrew Wolfe as he fights to recover. Let us hold their families close in our hearts during these difficult days ahead.

May God bless the Beckstrom and Wolfe families. May He watch over our National Guard, and may He bring comfort and healing to all who are hurting.

Mr. Speaker, may Specialist Sarah Beckstrom's soul rest in peace.

LESS REGULATION, MORE FREEDOM

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, every year, small businesses spend nearly \$15,000

per employee to comply with Federal laws. American companies spend over \$3 trillion a year on compliance.

I am sure this is not a shock to anyone in this Chamber, but we know that some of that cost gets passed on to consumers. The Competitive Enterprise Institute estimates that U.S. households absorb \$16,000 annually in hidden regulatory fees and taxes.

For many families in the Big First District of Kansas, that money could be used much better elsewhere.

When this Republican majority was elected last year, the country trusted us to roll back burdensome regulations and lower costs. This week, we have an opportunity to do so.

The small businesses that make up the Big First are often small, family-owned and -operated mom-and-pop shops. They don't manage or run their small businesses to be billionaires or to become ultrawealthy. Their goals are to serve their communities, meet a need, and serve their neighbors well. That is what they should be empowered to do, but sadly, that is not their reality.

Everyday Americans are forced to bear the brunt of that regulatory cost. If you talk to families across my district and ask them what they could do with \$16,000, the answers would be endless. Some may say that they would purchase a car for their family or teenage child.

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Many would love to see that money stored away in an emergency fund or a retirement fund. If their family has a loved one who is aging or facing health challenges, that money could be used to assist with caregiving or medical expenses. No matter the response, I feel confident that the vast majority of Kansans would agree that they could find a better use for those dollars than paying an additional tax to bureaucrats who want to regulate every detail of how they do business from hundreds of miles away.

This week, House Republicans will take a commonsense step forward by protecting consumers and small businesses alike from these costs. The Small Business Regulatory Reduction Act is exactly the type of legislation that this Congress was elected to enact. It ensures that any regulatory change from the SBA does not increase compliance costs for small businesses and, in turn, consumers. Regulations are meant to protect competition, not make costs unbearable for businessowners and consumers.

We are working to right that wrong, make small businesses stronger, and give American families more breathing room in their day-to-day expenses. Despite the distraction that the media and some of my colleagues across the aisle would love to see in this Chamber, this majority is still laser-focused on delivering on our promises that we made to the country last year. This is yet another small step forward to getting our country back on track and

helping small businesses thrive again. Promises made, promises kept.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LADY EAGLES VOLLEYBALL TEAM

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

Mr. CISNEROS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the South El Monte High School Lady Eagles volleyball team on their first-ever CIF Southern Section Division 9 championship.

In a hard-fought match, the Lady Eagles fell behind two sets to one before rallying back with determination and grit to take the lead. They forced a decisive fifth set, battling point-for-point until the score was tied 12-12. Senior Zaira Garcia then delivered back-to-back kills, sealing the championship for South El Monte.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Lady Eagles volleyball team on this historic achievement.

EL MONTE HIGH SCHOOL EAGLES FOOTBALL

Mr. CISNEROS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the amazing victory of the South El Monte High School Eagles football team in the 2025 CIF Division 14 championship game. The team claimed the school's first-ever championship in a nail-biting 14-6 win.

Under the leadership of their head coach, Frank Gallardo, the team devoted countless hours to training this season. Their hard work and competitive spirit carried them forward when the game was tied at six.

In the final minutes, Eagles quarterback Michael Maldonado stepped up under pressure and delivered a perfect 10-yard touchdown strike to Gabriel Canchola. This touchdown pass put the Eagles in the lead.

With 21 seconds still left, the Eagles' Ivan Lopez broke through the line to sack the opponent's quarterback and seal the championship.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Eagles football team for their first championship. Their hard work and teamwork shined through, and myself and our community are very proud of them.

BALDWIN PARK BRAVES FOOTBALL

Mr. CISNEROS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the inspiring 2025 football season of the Baldwin Park Braves.

After enduring a five-game losing streak, the Braves turned their season around with determination and teamwork and ultimately secured an at-large bid into Division 11 playoffs.

In the playoffs, the Braves became a different team and dominated their way to the CIF Division 11 championship game.

This was the first CIF Southern Section championship appearance for Baldwin Park since 1991. Unfortunately for the Braves, the goal of a championship would end when their opponent kicked the game-winning field goal with 8 seconds left on the clock.

Although they did not take home the title, their teamwork and determina-

tion reflected the true spirit of a champion and serves as an inspiration to all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the Baldwin Park Braves football team on their success this season. Their perseverance and commitment have made their community incredibly proud.

NEW LIFE CENTERS 20th ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 20th anniversary of New Life Centers, an organization that I am proud to represent in my district.

Led by Pastor Matt DeMateo, New Life Centers started as a small group working on community violence intervention programs and is now a city-wide movement providing our youth with mentoring, education, sports, play, summer day camps, after-school, and peacemaking programs.

Its community-based, hands-on approach has played a key role in driving down gun violence in our neighborhood of Little Village. New Life Centers Community Care programs also serve more than 45,000 individuals in need of housing, food, and other necessities. Its Pan de Vida Fresh Market distributes food to more than 35,000 individuals per year, filling the gaps that the funding cuts to Federal nutrition programs have created.

When Operation Midway Blitz brought chaos and pain to our community, Pastor Matt and New Life Centers responded by supporting immigrant families, taking food to their homes, and helping find loved ones that ICE had taken.

Mr. Speaker, the work of New Life Centers helps strengthen our community through faith, hope, and healing. I look forward to many more years of partnerships to change the lives and change neighborhoods.

RECOGNIZING OTIS P. GRAVES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great pride to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Otis P. Graves Elementary School in my district.

Its dual language model develops bilingual and biliterate students that can succeed and be proficient in English and Spanish, opening future opportunities in an increasingly global society.

Even through the challenging moments our community has faced this year, this school has remained a safe and welcoming place for all kids and has promoted and instilled a love of learning. No matter what may be happening at home or in the world, these kids know that they can come here to learn and feel supported.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent them in Congress, and I applaud the teachers, staff, administrators, and families that have helped build this milestone.

Congratulations to Otis P. Graves, and here is to 100 more years.

175TH ANNIVERSARY OF LEYDEN TOWNSHIP

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as the year comes to an end, I join Leyden Township in Cook County, Illinois, in celebration of the 175th anniversary of its establishment.

In addition to the unincorporated areas, the Leyden Township borders include part of Rosemont, Schiller Park, Franklin Park, part of Northlake, River Grove, Elmwood Park, parts of Melrose Park, Park Ridge, the most western part of Norridge and Bensenville, east of County Line Road.

Leyden Township is a place where neighbors care about each other and love spending time getting to know each other. You just have to attend one of their bingo nights to understand what I mean.

With more than 93,000 residents, Leyden Township takes care of their people. They have a pantry for those in need, a township handyman that provides free services for seniors, and a recreation department dedicated to building a stronger community through educational and recreational programming.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Leyden Township on its first 175 years.

HONORING FEEDING FAMILIES FOUNDATION

(Ms. DELAURO of Connecticut was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate something that began in the heart of my hometown, New Haven, Connecticut. A city known not only for its world-class pizza but for its big heart, its creativity, and the way our people lift one another up when times get tough.

About a year ago, I stood here on this very floor and proclaimed New Haven the pizza capital of the United States. Since that declaration, something remarkable has happened not just to our pizza scene but to the spirit of Connecticut itself.

We have witnessed an explosion of creativity led by local artist Michael Pollack, whose New Haven Pizza Club project turned our city's love of pizza into art and art into impact. At the same time, under the leadership of Connecticut's chief marketing officer Anthony Anthony, the State of Connecticut launched the Connecticut Pizza Trail, a campaign that captured imaginations nationwide.

Those efforts drew over 15 billion media impressions and helped make New Haven one of the top 10 most searched destinations in the world, according to Skyscanner.

In New Haven, pizza capital means more than great crust and perfect char. It means community. It means sharing warmth, care, and connection around the table.

Out of that same spirit, the same sense of togetherness, came a remarkable idea: the Feeding Families Foundation.