

All of southern Ohio is proud of the Cougar volleyball team. I look forward to their continued success.

□ 1215

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MAYOR ROBERT FOSTER

(Mr. GARCIA OF CALIFORNIA WAS RECOGNIZED TO ADDRESS THE HOUSE FOR 5 MINUTES.)

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mayor Bob Foster.

Bob was an incredible friend, a mentor, and a leader who gave so much to our country, our community, and my city of Long Beach.

As mayor of Long Beach for 8 years, he transformed the city into an economic powerhouse, and he led us through the 2008 financial crisis. He signed historic agreements to clean our air, to clean our water, and to clean our ports. He made our city government more efficient and responsive to residents.

Bob was also a successful businessman and CEO who brought his experience and support for working people to city hall. His vision and work led to the creation of our new civic center and downtown library. We honored that legacy when we named the new council chambers the Bob Foster Civic Chambers. It was one of the last actions we took when I was mayor of Long Beach.

His commitment to public service continued even after he left office. He and his family supported charities, nonprofits, and so many others across our city. They included mental health programs, initiatives for students and libraries, and Cal State, Long Beach.

Mr. Speaker, I first met Bob when I was a student at Cal State, Long Beach, and he served as a trustee for the California State University system. We served together again when I was elected to the city council and he was elected as mayor of Long Beach.

I was proud to support his agenda when I was on that council. When I ran for mayor, nobody did more to help my campaign than Bob. I was honored that he trusted me to be his successor for our community. His support was invaluable. I am honored that he trusted me, but most importantly, I am honored to have just known him.

His leadership is known across our community. He was a great friend and a great mentor. I enjoyed his advice, our talks, and, most importantly, his jokes. I will miss him terribly. All of our love is with his wife, Nancy, and his family.

Mr. Speaker, to his wife, Nancy, I will say that we love her so much. We support her. We thank her for all her work to our city, as well. We will continue to work and honor his incredible legacy.

HONORING SKIP KEESAL

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Skip Keesal.

Skip was a force, a friend, and a devoted leader in our community. He helped shape our country, our State, and the city of Long Beach. He dedicated his life to helping others and always doing the right thing. He knew everybody. Whether it was events he would have with U.S. Senators or with community members, he was as comfortable with those in power and in business as he was with community activists and the folks working across our community.

He was a giant in the legal profession, establishing one of the most admired law firms in California and one of the most powerful firms when it comes to maritime across the country.

Throughout his professional success, he maintained a deep commitment to our city and our people. He was the most respected and giving philanthropist in the city of Long Beach. Nobody did more than Skip.

He was tireless in his work for both the law firm and to countless charities and projects. The impact of his work will go on. It was a privilege to know him, to have worked alongside him, and to learn from him. I will miss our lunches, his advice, and his friendship.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts are always with Beth, his family, and those who loved him.

HONORING BOB MAXSON

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Bob Maxson.

Bob was the president of Cal State, Long Beach for 12 years, and he was also my biggest mentor in life. I am forever grateful for his friendship and guidance over the years.

More than anything, he was an incredible leader and teacher who devoted his life to the university and its students. His vision of excellence and effort to put student success front and center at CSULB turned it into the powerhouse it is today in our State.

He was the first president in the CSU system to win the Association's University President of the Year award by its own students. He won it so many times that the award was named in his honor. He coined the nickname "The Beach," of which Cal State, Long Beach is now known by. He enthusiastically supported its students and athletic teams across the campus.

Mr. Speaker, I first met Bob when I served as student body president. His kindness, support, and mentorship changed the course of my life. I know for so many other people, he was a constant presence. We stayed in touch throughout my entire time in office. He supported me when I was mayor, supported me when I got to Congress, and I spoke to him just a few months before he recently passed.

I have never stopped being grateful for his service to our university, to our students, and to our community. We will always be grateful. My thoughts are with his family and the Cal State, Long Beach community.

Go Beach.

RECOGNIZING THE SIAMESE TWINS MUSEUM

(Ms. FOXX of North Carolina was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Siamese Twins Museum, dedicated to Eng and Chang Bunker, located in Mount Airy, North Carolina.

Born in Thailand in 1811, which was then referred to as "Siam," Eng and Chang were the first documented Siamese twins. Early in their adult lives, they traveled around the entire world working in show business, but decided to settle in the United States.

After becoming naturalized American citizens and following a short stint in Wilkesboro, North Carolina, Eng and Chang, along with their wives and children, made the decision to move to Mount Airy in 1854.

They settled on Mount Airy because they sought better farmland and believed that the area presented many educational opportunities for their children. They each had 13 children. Soon after moving to Mount Airy, the two brothers became very successful in farming and were regarded as upstanding members of their community. Their many descendants have become very successful and prominent citizens also.

Mr. Speaker, the Siamese Twins Museum tells their story and does an excellent job of highlighting their lives through artifacts and interactive displays. Not only does Mount Airy house this museum but also the Andy Griffith Playhouse and Museum. Of course, Mount Airy is the prototype for the famous Mayberry series starring Andy Griffith.

Mr. Speaker, Mount Airy is a wonderful place to visit, and I encourage everyone to do so.

NATIONWIDE SHORTAGE IN PROFESSIONAL FIELDS

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

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I have heard from a lot of my colleagues about a nationwide shortage in professional fields like teaching, nursing, and social work. Our communities have done a lot of work to address these shortages so we can keep our hospitals and clinics and schools open. However, between pay, student loans, and even threats on the job, this is a hard time to go into fields like nursing and teaching.

Yet somehow, this administration found a way to make our workforce shortages in these areas worse and make it harder for people in professional fields facing shortages.

The administration just announced a plan that would remove professions like nursing, teaching, and social work from their list of graduate professional degrees, making it harder for people entering these fields to access financial aid.

What message does this send to people deciding whether or not to enter these critical fields facing shortages? When we have more shortages in teaching and healthcare, what will happen to our schools and our hospitals?

Workforce shortages also raise costs, and the policies of this President will, once again, raise costs on Americans and make it harder for them to access healthcare, mental health resources, or even get a great education.

The next time we hear about workforce shortages or rising costs, remember that this administration made the problem worse with this move.

HOMEOWNERSHIP HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE
AMERICAN DREAM

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, homeownership has always been a cornerstone of the American Dream. However, in my community in Virginia and in communities across the country, homeownership is slipping out of reach for many Americans.

Today, according to surveys, approximately half of potential home buyers cannot afford a downpayment anymore. The median age for a first-time home buyer was once in the late twenties and now it is 40 and continuing to rise. We need to put housing affordability front and center when we are talking about this affordability crisis.

I am proud to introduce the bipartisan First Home Savings Opportunity Act, legislation to support working Americans achieve their dream of homeownership.

The bill establishes first-time home buyer savings accounts, allowing future home buyers to save, with tax deductible contributions, for the downpayment and closing costs that often stand in their way.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill. Together, we can meet the affordability crisis head on and deliver real support for our constituents.

CONGRATULATING LOUDON COUNTY HIGH
SCHOOL'S FOOTBALL TEAM

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Loudon County High School's football team, led by Head Coach Matt Reidenbaugh, on making it to the State championship. They have put together a pretty impressive season, and they will be taking on the Varina Blue Devils. We wish Coach Reidenbaugh and the team the best of luck this weekend.

Go Captains.

CONGRATULATING KETTLE RUN HIGH SCHOOL
COUGARS

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Kettle Run High School Cougars, led by Head Coach Delmar Christian, on making it to the State championship in football. They put together an amazing season. They will take on Lake Taylor this weekend. We wish Coach Christian and the team the best of luck as they make Fauquier County proud.

Go Cougars.

CONGRATULATING THE INDEPENDENCE
POLICE DEPARTMENT

(Mr. MILLER of Ohio was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MILLER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Independence Police Department for receiving the 2025 National Officer Safety and Wellness award in comprehensive wellness. This is the top award in the country, and Independence Police Department is the first in Ohio ever to win it.

The department focuses on fitness, mental wellness, financial wellness, and family programming to keep its officers supported and operating at the highest levels.

Physical wellness is supported by on-site gym access, organized challenges and workouts, and free wellness exams and cancer screenings. Its mental health support includes confidential counseling, peer and chaplain programs, and an annual screening with a licensed mental health clinician. Additionally, between 2023 and 2024, information gleaned from nutrition and financial wellness seminars contributed to a 50 percent reduction in sick time usage within the department, resulting in \$125,000 in savings for the city.

Mr. Speaker, the Independence Police Department's comprehensive wellness program is truly unparalleled, and I congratulate them on this more than well-received award.

CELEBRATING EILEEN QUINE'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. MILLER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my constituent Eileen Quine, who celebrated her 100th birthday on Halloween.

Eileen's children describe her as a loving wife to her husband, a master sergeant in the Marine Corps, with whom she shared 74 years of marriage before his passing.

She was heavily involved in the lives of her three children: Karen, Ronald, and Loree, always providing a welcoming home where their friends could gather.

She has five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and ten nieces and nephews who all call her weekly and some even daily to keep in touch. She is a social animal who loves being with people and is a wonderful friend, aunt, and, most of all, mother.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Eileen a very happy 100th birthday.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BOB SEKERAK

Mr. MILLER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Bob Sekerak, a proud Clevelander.

Born to John and Mary, and beloved husband to Linda, Bob's greatest joy was his son, Brian.

Drafted into the Army during the Vietnam war, Bob served honorably as a medic in Seattle.

After the war, he returned home to Hinckley, where he spent happy days swimming in the lake and enjoying barbecues with his family and friends. Bob built a distinguished career as a respiratory therapist at Metro Health

Systems in Cleveland, working alongside his brother David until retirement. A gifted pianist, he brought joy to many with his favorite songs.

In later years, Bob found peace on a small farm in Medina, raising rescued horses and a spirited donkey, always accompanied by his loyal German shepherd. His favorite horse, Duke, reflected Bob's own gentle strength.

Today, we celebrate a life of service, music, and quiet devotion, a life that touched all who knew him.

RECOGNIZING CHIEFS OF POLICE ROBERT BUTLER
AND EDWARD KINNEY

Mr. MILLER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize two individuals: Independence, Ohio Chief of Police Robert Butler, and Medina, Ohio Chief of Police Ed Kinney.

Earlier this year, Chief Butler was sworn in as president of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police and Chief Kinney was sworn in as first vice president of the Association.

The Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police was established almost 100 years ago to serve its members through a broad range of services, including professional, educational, and informational services.

The goal is to foster improvements in police practices, training, and education while increasing the public's understanding of the role police play in keeping all of us safe.

The association made a great decision to select two great chiefs that happened to be from my district for these leadership positions.

Chief Butler has been a police officer since 2008 and became the Independence Chief of Police in 2021. Meanwhile, Chief Kinney has served the city of Medina for over two decades, becoming chief of police in 2017.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Chief Butler and Chief Kinney for their leadership in both Ohio's Seventh District and the whole State of Ohio. I thank them both so much for their service.

□ 1230

RECOGNIZING LADY LAKE,
FLORIDA

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

Mr. FINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the town of Lady Lake, Florida, which celebrated its remarkable centennial in November. Though the town held its first official meeting in 1925, Lady Lake's story reaches back to the 1880s, when a new railway depot sparked growth in a community first home to the Seminole Indians.

From its early years as a hub for citrus and watermelon growers to the history now preserved by the Lady Lake Historical Society Museum, the town's heritage reflects a century of resilience.

The recent weeklong celebration brought that heritage to life, uniting residents, visitors, and community partners in a series of events to honor 100 years of hometown pride.