

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 Cleveland.

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.

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#### 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.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the town commission, along with Town Manager Lawrence and Police Chief Hunt, for their leadership in making this milestone possible. My thanks also go to every department, volunteer, and community partner who helped make that celebration unforgettable.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to represent the residents of Lady Lake in Congress. Here is to another 100 years of community connection and tradition.

#### RECOGNIZING CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH

Mr. FINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of Flagler Beach, which celebrated its 100th anniversary this year, marking a century since its official incorporation. Though it would not become an official city until 1963, Flagler Beach's history stretches back even further, when it was originally known as the town of Ocean City.

The iconic Flagler Beach Pier quickly became a gathering place for residents and visitors alike, and the existing A-frame carrying the city's name remains a treasured piece of that early history. My office will continue working with FEMA and our State, county, and local partners to assist with the pier's restoration, ensuring this landmark endures for future generations.

Flagler Beach has always been defined by its close-knit community, small businesses, and the enduring spirit that makes this city truly unique. I extend my sincere thanks to the Flagler Beach City Commission and the staff for their leadership and dedication in preserving this community and its heritage.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to represent the people of Flagler Beach in Congress. Here is to 100 more years of community, resilience, and a bright future for this coastal gem.

#### RECOGNIZING LAKE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT DIANE KORNEGAY

Mr. FINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Diane Kornegay for her selection as Florida's 2026 Superintendent of the Year.

Ms. Kornegay is a seasoned educator with more than 35 years of experience. Under her tutelage, Lake County Schools have made significant strides in academic performance, achieving an A grade from the Florida Department of Education in 2025 for the first time since 2008, which is no easy task.

Since the beginning of her tenure, Lake County Schools have also seen notable increases in proficiency, including 15 percentage points in algebra 1 and 7 percentage points in English language arts for grades 9 and 10.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Kornegay is committed to serving her community and ensuring academic excellence for her students. Lake County is fortunate to have such an excellent servant, and I am honored to congratulate her on receiving this award.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF JULIUS "JULES" KWIATKOWSKI

Mr. FINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Commissioner Ju-

lius "Jules" Kwiatkowski, a faithful public servant who served as commissioner of the East Flagler County Mosquito Control District for 17 years.

We have a lot of mosquitoes in Florida. Throughout his tenure, Mr. Kwiatkowski helped guide the district through major accomplishments, including the expansion of mosquito control services to meet the needs of a growing community. His service to the community was so exemplary that he was honored with the unveiling of the "Jules the Turtle" statue to celebrate his enduring community spirit.

Even before his election as commissioner, Mr. Kwiatkowski was a dedicated community servant. Upon moving to Florida, he volunteered with Palm Coast Fire and Police and served during the 1998 Flagler County wildfires.

Beyond his service, Jules was a dedicated husband and father. Flagler County was incredibly fortunate to have such an excellent man serve the community. May his memory be a blessing.

#### RECOGNIZING VOLUSIA COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT CARMEN BALGOBIN

Mr. FINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Superintendent Carmen Balgobin of Volusia County Schools for her selection as 2025 Superintendent of the Year by the National Association of School Superintendents.

Superintendent Balgobin's leadership of Volusia County Schools has been transformative. Under her watch, the district received its first A rating in 16 years from the Florida Department of Education, achieved a 93.7 graduation rate, and eliminated all D-rated schools in the county. Her innovative approach of focusing on college and career technical pathways programs, which specify teaching students practical skills for their next steps, has paid dividends for the education of all Volusia County students.

Mr. Speaker, Superintendent Balgobin is committed to serving her community and ensuring academic excellence for her students. Volusia County is fortunate to have such an excellent servant, and I am honored to congratulate her on receiving this award.

#### CELEBRATING LEE COUNTY, IOWA

(Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS of Iowa was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a major milestone for Lee County in my district. With a critical \$2.1 million grant in community project funding, the Meller Family Health Center and Lee County EMS facility became a reality and officially opened. I am proud to have secured these funds for the EMS bay improvement project, but also for the Lee County Public Health Department, which has its first independent base of operations in more than three decades

and will save on rental income for the county.

This new health center and EMS facility will strengthen our public health infrastructure and improve emergency response for families across the region. This project has long been important to both the community and to me, and I am grateful to support investments that restore, maintain, and enhance essential public health services, enhance emergency response capabilities, and help Lee County continue to grow.

Mr. Speaker, the opening of the Meller Family Health Center marks a new chapter of progress and preparedness for our community.

#### RECOGNIZING EASTON VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Easton Valley High School team for earning first place at the 2025 Clinton Community College Academic Quiz Bowl. The team, led by Coach Jenny Knutsen, included Captain Tyson Tubbs, Lucas Kunde, Tyler Kunde, and Nizhonia Schmidt.

Each year, high school teams compete by answering questions across a wide range of subjects, including math, history, science, language, literature, government, music, arts, sports, and current events, sort of like Trivial Pursuit.

Clinton Community College awards a trophy to the winning school, and the Sharar Foundation further supports these students with a \$1,200 scholarship for graduates who choose to attend Clinton Community College.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Easton Valley team on their dedication, hard work, and commitment to learning. They have made their school and community incredibly proud.

#### CONGRATULATING EXECUTIVE CHEF TESSA CARDOZA

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tessa Cardoza on her impressive victory in the Iowa Restaurant Association culinary competition.

Ms. Cardoza, the executive chef at Maxwell's On the River in Muscatine, Iowa, is known for her exceptional culinary skill and creativity. In collaboration with the Iowa Beef Industry Council, Choose Iowa, and Lola's Fine Hot Sauce, another entrepreneurial product made in Iowa, she crafted an outstanding entree featuring a locally sourced beef tri-tip roast that truly impressed the judges.

Chef Cardoza plans to return to the competition next year as the defending champion, ready to showcase her talents once again. Her determination, passion, creativity, and expertise reflect a lifelong commitment to fulfilling her childhood dream of becoming a chef.

Iowa is fortunate to have such a talented and inspiring individual who turns the incredible ingredients produced in our State into award-winning dishes. I am going to have to make another trip to Maxwell's On the River.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Tessa Cardoza on her achievement that