

I am grateful to Representative BROWN for joining me on this legislation that will help ease the burden on families.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds Members that the rules do not allow references to persons in the gallery.

#### ELON MUSK AND DEMOCRACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, hell hath no fury like the deep state scorned. That has become obvious from the over-the-top hysterics directed against Elon Musk as he turns over bureaucratic rocks and shines a light on what has been going on beneath them.

What he has already exposed should infuriate and alarm every American. Millions of taxpayer dollars are covertly used to support a tax on the Democrats' political opponents, millions more to support far-left causes in this and other countries, millions of dollars that were supposed to defend Ukraine and that instead vanished into the pockets of Ukrainian businessmen, millions more to fund the Wuhan lab that unleashed COVID on the world, \$15 million spent on condoms for the Taliban, millions more to support illegal aliens entering our country, and still millions more on promoting leftist gender ideology around the world.

America is on the verge of bankruptcy, yet the elites within our government have no conscience at all as they hollow out the earnings of working Americans to fund their pet ideological causes. Instead of hanging their heads in shame, the Democrats actively defend this waste.

Congress never voted to spend money in this manner. Unelected bureaucrats within the sprawling Federal labyrinth did this behind the backs not only of the American people but of their elected Representatives.

They say the most closely guarded State secrets are not those marked "top secret" but those considered embarrassing. By exposing this outrageous waste, Mr. Musk has embarrassed the Democrats, which is why they tried to bar him from opening the books for the American people to see. Now that those embarrassing secrets are being revealed, the left has reverted to its tired old habits of personal attacks and character assassination.

The new boss hires an accountant. The accountant says: Joe, let's see the expense account records. Suddenly, it is a threat to democracy and a constitutional crisis. A threat to democracy? That is somewhat ironic from a party that just threw out a year's worth of primary elections when they didn't like the candidate that their own voters selected.

It turned out their voters didn't like their unelected nominee either, and

Americans instead elected Donald Trump as President with an overwhelming majority.

To my Democratic colleagues, that is what is called democracy.

The Democrats shout constitutional crisis. Do they not understand, that under our Constitution, executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States? All executive power flows from the President to his subordinates and advisers. That includes Elon Musk, as well as every bureaucrat at USAID.

Under our Constitution, there is no executive power that is independent of the President. The difference is that Elon Musk is carrying out the policies that the people elected this government to pursue and the bureaucrats at USAID are not. That is a big problem in a democracy.

The Democrats tell us that it is undemocratic for the democratically elected President to question how the unelected bureaucracy is executing the laws, laws that the President is elected to uphold. How can a President faithfully execute the laws if he and his deputies cannot see clearly and accurately where the public money is going, verify that it is being spent in accordance with the law, and put a stop to it when it is not?

The true threat to democracy is an entrenched ruling class that operates entirely outside the control of the duly elected representatives of the people. Once that takes root, elections become meaningless because the people's decisions at the ballot box are no longer executed by their government. The Federal bureaucracy increasingly acts independently and often in defiance of the people's choices.

That was the story of the first Trump Presidency. It must not be the story of the second or of any future Presidency because it is the very definition of a tyranny, a government operating outside the control of the people. That is what the Democrats are now advocating.

In his Gettysburg Address, Lincoln noted the great task remaining before us. He offered a prayer, really, "that this Nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the Earth."

That remains the great question and the great challenge of our generation. It is a destiny that we must fulfill.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM GEARY, SR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. KENNEDY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember William Geary, Sr., a remarkable man whose life was a testament to service, dedication, and love for his family, our country, and our community.

William Geary, Sr., grew up on Good Avenue in South Buffalo, the proud son

of a large Irish Catholic family. He attended South Park High School before answering the call of duty, serving in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam war. A two-tour veteran, he returned from his first deployment to meet the love of his life, Cathleen, his future wife, on a blind date. Just 2 weeks later, they were married and began their journey together.

After his decorated military service, Bill dedicated his life to hard work and our community. A proud union man and retired Teamster, he found a second career at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park. There, he worked diligently to preserve the history of our Nation's servicemembers, laboring tirelessly on the ships he loved so much.

Service was the cornerstone of Bill's life. Whether it was his devotion to his family, his dedication to veterans, or his willingness to lend a hand or an ear to anyone in need, he lived by the creed of putting others before himself.

Bill faced health challenges later in life due to complications from Agent Orange and COPD. He received care at the Buffalo VA Medical Center, where he considered his doctors, nurses, and aides heroes. His enduring wish was to improve the VA system for others, a mission his family carries forward in his honor.

Bill was a devoted husband to Cathleen, a loving father to Kellie, Kathryn, and William Jr., and a proud grandfather to seven. William Jr. has proudly carried on his father's legacy of public service as a senior master sergeant in the United States Air Force Reserve and is the Erie County commissioner of public works.

Today, as we remember William Geary, Sr., we reflect on a life well lived, a life of service, sacrifice, and unconditional love. May his legacy inspire us to uphold the values he embodied and to continue striving for a better future for our families and communities.

May he rest in peace.

HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM DUNFORD, JR.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of William Dunford, Jr., a dedicated public servant, educator, husband, and father.

Bill's life was defined by his unwavering commitment to his family and our entire community. Over his 17-year career as a University of Buffalo police officer, he demonstrated a steadfast dedication to protecting and serving. As the chair of the criminal justice program at Erie Community College, he taught and mentored countless young officers, instilling in them the importance of compassion, integrity, and professionalism. He believed in learning through experience.

Bill brought students on Sleep Outs to hear from people living on the streets about their experiences and challenges, teaching them about the human side of law enforcement. Bill wanted his students to see, feel, and

understand the world of the vulnerable, ensuring they would serve with empathy and awareness.

Aside from teaching our young people, Bill also taught seniors at the Polish Community Center how to protect themselves from fraud and other harm.

Outside of the classroom, Bill was an accomplished athlete and a star pitcher at Bishop Timon-St. Jude High School. He earned respect and accolades on every field and court he played on.

Later in life, he shared his love of sports by coaching young athletes, earning the 2000 Coach of the Year award for his dedication. He would go on to be recognized in the Western New York Baseball Hall of Fame.

A devoted husband to Denise, father to his three sons, Brendan, Matthew, and Ryan, and his daughter, Lauren, and grandfather of 14, Bill cherished his time with family and brought joy and humor to all those around him.

Bill's legacy goes beyond the classrooms where he taught or where he coached. He inspired his three sons to pursue careers in law enforcement, continuing his mission of service. His daughter is following in her own career of service to the public as a family doctor.

Bill Dunford, Jr., was a pillar of our community and a dear friend. He will be deeply missed. May his example continue to inspire all of us to serve with love, dedication, and compassion.

May Bill Dunford, Jr., rest in peace.

#### DECLARING KANSAS CITY CHIEFS THE GREATEST NFL TEAM OF ALL TIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. ALFORD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ALFORD. Madam Speaker, today, I rise with an extremely important declaration about the Kansas City Chiefs.

I am honored today to be wearing the red blazer that I made for the late, great Tony DiPardo, the bandleader for the Kansas City Chiefs for many years.

In case my colleagues haven't heard, we have a big game on Sunday that is going to make some noise, spark some joy, and make the entire Chiefs Kingdom proud.

I stand before the House today to declare, to decree, and make it official that the Kansas City Chiefs are the greatest NFL team of all time.

From the sea of red at Arrowhead to the chants of "Chiefs Kingdom" echoing across our great Nation, this team has captured the hearts of America. It started from a legacy of folks like Lenny Dawson, Deron Cherry, Bobby Bell, Derrick Thomas, and Will Shields, and it grew thanks to the modern-day miracle magic of Patrick Mahomes, Travis Kelce, and Harrison Butker.

This dynasty has put the entire NFL in the Chiefs era, giving the haters cruel summers for 3 years in a row.

To the naysayers, we say they need to calm down. They thought this year

would be different, but, once again, they were having *deja vu*. They forgot Patrick Mahomes does nothing better than revenge. They thought Travis would be too distracted by his love story to perform in the big games. They wrongly thought that delicate Josh Allen would be tired of only winning paper rings.

Madam Speaker, we know all too well how this season turned out with the Chiefs winning the Lamar Hunt Trophy again. Now, they have turned their attention to their third consecutive trip to the Super Bowl.

When the Chiefs arrived in New Orleans, there were teardrops on the Eagles' guitars.

Get ready, America, because the 2025 Lombardi Trophy has a blank space, and the Chiefs are about to write their name in that blank space once again.

To put it quite simply, the Chiefs are unbeatable. They will be champions not once, not twice, but three times in a row.

Madam Speaker, the great Mitch Holthus is fond of saying that you can doubt the Chiefs, you can dislike the Chiefs, you can disrespect the Chiefs, but you are going to have to deal with the Chiefs.

To all the Chiefs watching, Missouri is rooting for you. The Fourth Congressional District is rooting for you.

Go Chiefs.

#### SELF-DETERMINATION AND VIRGIN ISLANDS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to acknowledge and congratulate the newly elected members of the Sixth Constitutional Convention in the Virgin Islands.

The willingness of each one of them to help us move forward to achieve civil rights and self-determination as a collective people is commendable. The work that they do in this legislative session will uplift generations of Virgin Islanders to come.

The legacy of the Virgin Islands—Saint Croix, Saint Thomas, Saint John, and Water Island—continues to be defined by the collective greatness of all Virgin Islanders who have resisted exploitation in the name of freedom and independence.

We first exercised our right of self-determination in 1493 when a Carib party on the island of Saint Croix fiercely resisted Christopher Columbus' expedition, preventing his men from establishing a foothold on the island.

□ 1030

Over the next 200 years, the Caribs fought colonization until they were completely eradicated in 1590. Their enduring resistance is our ancestral legacy. The island of Ay Ay, Saint Croix, from which I come, is proud to

see this legacy continue in this Sixth Constitutional Convention.

It continues. In 1733, the Akwamu, enslaved individuals from Ghana, fought against their enslavement on the island of Saint John and became the first organized armed resistance in the Western Hemisphere against enslavement. They held that island for almost a year until the Danes working with the Spaniards, the French, and the British were able to overthrow them.

The organizers of that rebellion chose collective suicide rather than go back to slavery.

In 1848, on the island of Saint Croix, those enslaved organized themselves, rose up, and took their freedom. Our freedom was not given to us by any individual or any government. We took it for ourselves. That is the legacy from which I come, and as a daughter of the Virgin Islands, I will continue that fight.

The Virgin Islands has held five Constitutional Conventions since its acquisition by the United States in 1917, yet no constitutional drafts have been approved since 1977. Personally, I believe some of the issues that we have put in our constitution are issues that were never resolved by Denmark when we became part of the United States.

As of 2025, the Virgin Islands have governed under the Revised Organic Act of 1954, which acts as the *de facto* local constitution after being passed by Congress in 1936.

As not only the Representative of the Virgin Islands here in Congress but as a daughter of those islands, my family on both sides go back in records to the 1700s, maybe earlier. And it is for them that I continue to fight for the fundamental and constitutional rights for which all Americans, including Virgin Islanders, are entitled.

When we became a part of the United States, my grandfather's generation came to Washington and insisted that we be a part of the draft. We wanted the responsibility along with the privileges of being part of the American experience. We are part of the draft. We fight in every war in numbers per capita greater than any other State, and yet, no Virgin Islander can vote for their Commander in Chief.

I have built upon the work of my predecessor, Congresswoman Donna Christensen and numerous Governors of the Virgin Islands to challenge the United States' reliance on the Insular Cases as it relates to the territories. The Insular Cases were decided at the turn of the 20th century by the Supreme Court to justify a racist and colonial legal framework for the territories.

Now, you may ask, oh, why are you saying it is racist? When the Supreme Court Justice in his opinion says that the people who inhabit these islands are savages who cannot understand constitutional law, that is *prima facie* racism to me, particularly when a Virgin Islander who came to the United