

launched the equity and empowerment initiative, which led to the creation of our Office of Equity and Human Rights. The city implemented key police reforms, including updates to the use of force standards, and established the city of Tacoma's first Youth Commission, giving high school students a chance to learn how government works. She passed Home in Tacoma, which expanded key and necessary housing opportunities across the entire city.

She also raised our profile nationally by serving as president of the National League of Cities, promoting the platform of people, partnership, and possibilities. She launched the Growing Resilience in Tacoma, otherwise known as GRIT, one of the first guaranteed-income pilots in the entire Nation to address systemic poverty. She supported the creation of Maritime 253, which is a skills training center in partnership with Tacoma Public Schools and the Port of Tacoma.

Throughout her career, Mayor Woodards has broken barriers, championing equity and justice for all, and has been instrumental in ensuring that every voice in our community is heard.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mayor Woodards for her selfless service to "The City of Destiny," Tacoma, Washington, and the Nation.

#### ENSURING FAIRNESS AND INTEGRITY IN FEDERAL TRIBAL RECOGNITION

(Mr. EDWARDS of North Carolina was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, this year's NDAA strengthens America's military readiness. It invests in cutting-edge defense capabilities. It ensures our servicemembers have the training, tools, and support they need to confront the growing threats that we face at home and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong opposition to the NDAA provision that seeks to circumvent the established merit-based process for Federal Tribal recognition and instead grant unchecked Federal recognition to the Lumbee community.

I am proud to represent North Carolina's 11th District, home of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, a sovereign Tribal Nation whose culture, language, and history are a treasure not only to the State of North Carolina but to the United States as a whole.

The Eastern Band of Cherokee are the descendants of those who fought to remain in their ancestral homelands in the face of forced Federal removal. By contrast, it must be noted that the Lumbee community has no treaties with the Federal Government, no reservation land, and no common language.

As Members of Congress, one of our most solemn responsibilities is to ensure that laws are applied fairly, objectively, and consistently.

For over 40 years, the Department of the Interior through the Office of Federal Acknowledgement has carried out a rigorous merit-based process for determining Federal Tribal recognition. This process was created by Congress to prevent political favoritism or arbitrary decisionmaking as it requires careful documentation and verification, including proof of Native American ancestry.

Bypassing this process, as is suggested through this NDAA, by including the Lumbee Fairness Act as an amendment, sets a dangerous precedent. It would invite other groups with unsubstantiated claims to sidestep this process and seek recognition through political channels rather than merit. That undermines the integrity of the recognition process, and it threatens the credibility of Indian Country as a whole.

The OFA has found that some petitioning groups consisted entirely of individuals unable to demonstrate Native American ancestry, not a single person. Recognizing these groups would be a disservice to legitimate Tribes. In the case of the Lumbee, this amendment would in one stroke create the largest Tribe in the country, granting immediate access to already overstretched Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service resources.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I am proud of the work that we have done to provide robust funding for the Indian Health Service and other critical priorities for federally recognized Tribes in the fiscal year 2026 Interior appropriations bill.

If the Tribal population eligible for these services suddenly grows by tens of thousands of people, many of whom have no native ancestry, resources will be spread too thin, and the Tribes with established rights will suffer.

That is the crux of the issue. If the Lumbee had a case that could withstand the scrutiny of the OFA process, they would go through the OFA process as set out by law. But as they know, it won't hold up under a deliberative process. They sought special treatment through the legislative shortcuts, despite opposition from more than 140 federally recognized Tribes from across the country that have stated the integrity of this process must be preserved, and I agree. Recognition should be earned on the merits, not granted through politics.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this provision and uphold the process put in place by Congress decades ago to ensure fairness and integrity in Federal Tribal recognition.

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#### RECOGNIZING OCFA CHIEF BRIAN FENNESSY

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

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Orange County Fire

Authority Chief Brian Fennessy, who, after 8 years as chief, will be retiring.

While at Orange County Fire Authority, Chief Fennessy led the department through the COVID-19 pandemic and through the Bond, Silverado, and Blue Ridge fires. He was named by the Orange County Register as one of the most influential individuals in Orange County in 2020.

After his retirement, Chief Fennessy will now assume the director role in the newly created U.S. Wildland Fire Service.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chief Fennessy for his commitment to keeping Orange County safe. He will be missed. I congratulate him on his retirement.

#### RECOGNIZING ANAHEIM POLICE CHIEF RICK ARMENDARIZ

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Anaheim Police Chief Rick Armendariz, who, after 30 years at Anaheim Police, will be retiring from law enforcement.

In 2019, Chief Armendariz joined the Anaheim Police Department. During his time as chief, Chief Armendariz championed community engagement, worked with local schools, and pushed to improve conditions and resources for Anaheim's homeless population.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chief Armendariz for keeping our community safe, and I congratulate him on his well-earned retirement.

#### HONORING JAMES T. POSTON

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor James "Jamie" T. Poston, a proud American and Vietnam combat veteran who has dedicated his life to serving our great country.

Jamie entered the United States Army in 1966, deploying to Vietnam as a Mustang crew chief.

Today, at 80 years young, Jamie remains a pillar of support for our local veterans. Every Thursday, he volunteers at the military diversion court in Santa Ana. He attends bimonthly veteran treatment court meetings, and he drives fellow veterans to recovery groups. He makes sure that no one walks their journey alone.

Jamie Poston represents the very best of our veterans and Vietnam war veterans—courage in war, compassion in peace, and service that never ends.

#### RECOGNIZING 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the 75th anniversary of the Municipal Water District of Orange County. For 75 years, MWDOC has been our county's water supplier.

In Orange County, they have been critical to delivering emergency preparedness, water use efficiency, and public education. From working with local Scout groups to supporting investments in our future water supply reliability, MWDOC has truly impacted every life in Orange County.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate MWDOC on its 75th anniversary.

#### RECOGNIZING LE DINH LUONG

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the birthday of Vietnamese human rights defender Le Dinh

Luong. Mr. Le is a peaceful activist and a prisoner of conscience.

In 2018, he was persecuted for campaigning for compensation for Vietnamese fishermen affected by the Formosa environmental disaster. Mr. Le is not the first Vietnamese individual to be persecuted by the Vietnamese Government for speaking in support of the victims of the Formosa environmental disaster.

I am committed, Mr. Speaker, to working with the State Department to work with the Vietnamese Government for an end to Mr. Le's solitary confinement, to allow him to practice his religion in prison, to allow him to receive appropriate medical care, and, finally, to consider his early release.

#### REMEMBERING ZACH SCHEIMAN

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

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, Zach Scheiman was a true patriot. Born and raised in Garden City, Kansas, Zach was a deep lover of freedom who embodied courage and service over self. Zach lived by these principles, and they guided him through his lifetime.

Tragically, Zach passed away doing what he loved most, serving others. He gave up his life while fighting alongside the Ukrainian Special Forces, defending the principles he so greatly believed in.

As a young boy, Zach fell in love with aviation. He could often be found helping with events at the Garden City Regional Airport or excitedly watching his father, Mike, in the air traffic control tower. Those countless hours at the airport made a lasting impact on him, and as a young adult, Zach answered the call to serving in the United States Air Force.

Throughout his Air Force career, Zach served at Altus Air Force Base in Oklahoma, Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, and completed international stints in Iraq and Qatar. Zach also served with the Royal Air Force in Mildenhall in the United Kingdom.

For the last 11 years, Zach served in his hometown once more as an air traffic controller at the same place where his love for aviation began, the Garden City Regional Airport.

Zach did not keep that love of aviation to himself. He couldn't. He found joy in sharing that passion for aviation with student groups who visited the air traffic control tower, as well as with visitors and student pilots learning the field that he loved so much.

Zach poured into Garden City's youth by serving on the local arts boards in Garden City and actively participating in community career fairs. He left his community better than he found it, creating gains for students and helping organize local festivals, recitals, and shows.

Zach was a man of honor, and Audrey and I are deeply grateful for his service to our Nation and our community. We pray for his loved ones and the Garden

City community as they come to terms with his untimely passing. May his soul rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Zach for his duty and service.

#### CELEBRATING KANSAS FOOTBALL

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize four remarkable high school football programs in the Big First District that brought home State championships this season.

In Kansas, high school football is more than a sport. It teaches discipline, teamwork, perseverance, and the importance of community. More importantly, it connects us all through a common good while making memories that will last a lifetime.

As a kid from western Kansas, I grew up listening to K-State football on the radio. Like so many young people across our State, those Saturday broadcasts shaped my love of the game. I later had the privilege of playing on a State championship team myself at Quinter High School, and I remember the feeling of being part of something bigger than myself. That is what these young men experienced this season.

This year, four schools from the Big First reached the top of their divisions.

In 6A, Manhattan High School claimed the title with a decisive 27-0 win over Olathe Northwest. Their players, coaches, and staff worked hard all season to earn an achievement that will be remembered in the Manhattan community forever.

In 5A, my hometown of Salina is celebrating a very special moment. The Salina Central Mustangs brought home the State championship with a 51-34 victory over Basehor-Linwood. For the students, families, and alumni who have longed for another State championship for the last 20 years, I congratulate them on bringing their title home. They all deserve it, and we are all so proud.

In the 1A Division, Sterling football defeated Rossville 35-34 in one of the closest and most competitive games of the season. Games like this reflect the best of high school athletics: determination, sportsmanship, and communities rallying behind their teams.

In an eight-man Division II, Hanover earned a 28-20 victory over Victoria to secure another championship for their school. Eight-man football has deep roots in rural Kansas, and Hanover's success highlights the strength of programs that represent some of our smallest but proudest communities.

Mr. Speaker, four State championships in 1 year from schools in the Big First District is quite an accomplishment. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the strong communities, dedicated coaches, supportive families, and student-athletes who put the work in day after day to bring these championships home.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating these young men, their schools, and their hometowns. They have represented Kansas with pride, and they have very bright futures ahead.

#### INTERVENING IN GOP'S RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT TRUMP

(Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE of California was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I want to just say that Republicans have endured a rather lopsided relationship with Donald Trump this year—dare I say, abusive. I hope you will consider this a Republican intervention. For the record, these are not attacks. They are just facts.

Healthcare: Republicans cut \$1 trillion from Medicaid with their big, ugly bill, threatening their own vulnerable constituents, when three-quarters of Medicaid enrollees are in red States, and rural hospitals across this country are struggling to stay open.

Republicans then shut down the government to avoid a vote on extending ACA subsidies, only for Trump to later come out in support of extending these subsidies.

A recent Navigator poll shows that Americans blame Trump and congressional Republicans for rising healthcare premiums by a 26-point margin. Surprise: Americans also overwhelmingly blame Republicans for the shutdown. I see tread marks everywhere.

Redistricting: The drama started when Trump called Greg Abbott and demanded five more Republican seats in Texas, triggering California's redistricting efforts that could cost California Republicans five seats. It is funny how my Republican colleagues were, are, and remain silent when Texas, Ohio, Missouri, and North Carolina gerrymander, but throw a tantrum when California punches back.

Chip deal: I don't mean nachos or potatoes. I mean the AI, computing, and national security kind. For years, my China-hawk Republicans warned about the competition with the CCP, only for Trump to ignore them and green-light Nvidia H200 chip sales to China in exchange for a 25 percent fee. What happened to tough on China?

Boat strikes: Republicans have abdicated their constitutional war powers authority, allowing the Trump administration to carry out extrajudicial killings off the coast of Venezuela under the guise of stopping drug trafficking. Meanwhile, Trump just pardoned the President of Honduras, who was convicted of helping to move 400 tons of cocaine into the United States. My colleagues need to square the circle for me. Please do it.

Deficit: Republicans who call themselves fiscal hawks stayed true to President Trump and got rewarded with \$2 trillion added to the national debt, bringing us to a whopping \$38 trillion. How many zeroes are in that number? Far too many for Americans to afford.

Then, there was the mighty whiplash of the Epstein files. Trump and Republicans spent an entire year trying to block the release of the Epstein files, only for Trump to reverse course at the