

“The Chick” was bought at a charity fundraiser and presented to then-Congressman Joel Pritchard as a gift to his office in the early 1970s.

Congressman Pritchard, as the story goes, wasn’t too fond of the painting. In true Washington fashion, he decided that the honorable way to handle it was to regift the baby chick to the next new member of the Washington delegation.

As such, he passed it on to Congressman Norman Dicks in 1976, and it then went to Congressman Mike Lowry in 1979. It has been passed down ever since, with each new Member from Washington State signing the back before giving it to the next new, proud owner.

The only Congressman who didn’t sign it was then-Congressman Jay Inslee, and Congressman Inslee then lost his election.

Mr. Speaker, when I was gifted “The Chick,” I decided to give it a proper name: “Baby Jay.” As I prepare to part ways with “Baby Jay” to my Washington State colleague EMILY RANDALL, I share this lighthearted piece of Washington delegation history and the spirit of continuity and camaraderie that it represents with the House today.

RECOGNIZING KIRBY MOORE

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the new football coach of Washington State University, Coach Kirby Moore.

Just before the holidays, WSU hired Kirby Moore, a Washington native, as our new head coach. Kirby Moore is young, hungry, and armed with an impressive coaching resume. Coach Moore is ready to lead the Cougs to new heights in his first head coaching role.

Kirby grew up going to Cougar football games. Kirby said: “For me, this is home. We’ve got grandparents in Palouse. We’ve got aunts in Pullman, aunts in Spokane. My parents just built a house in the Tri-Cities, so there’s some incredible memories for my kids.” They are the same memories that he grew up with.

Mr. Speaker, as such, I welcome Coach Kirby Moore back to the Palouse, back home, and I look forward to his leadership of our crimson and gray. Go Cougs.

RECOGNIZING SISTER MARY JESUS OCHOA ON HER CENTENNIAL BIRTHDAY

(Ms. RIVAS of California was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. RIVAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sister Mary Jesus Ochoa of the Order of St. Francis in San Fernando. This week, she celebrated her 100th birthday.

Sister Mary Jesus is a member of the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, who entered religious life in the 1940s. She has spent decades supporting our most vulnerable across the San Fernando Valley and in Mexico.

During her service, she worked with children and families in need, empha-

sizing care, stability, and long-term support.

Sister Mary Jesus played a key leadership role at the Poverello of Assisi Retreat House in San Fernando. There, she helped provide retreat services, community support, and housing for young women and children.

When earthquakes caused major damage to the retreat house and the surrounding buildings, Sister Mary Jesus led the rebuilding efforts to make sure that services were not interrupted for those who need it the most.

Sister Mary Jesus’ work reflects steady leadership, resilience in times of crisis, and a clear commitment to serving others with dignity and purpose.

I wish Sister Mary Jesus a happy 100th birthday. The San Fernando Valley is grateful for her dedication to helping our community.

FUNDING TO REBUILD AFTER WILDFIRES

Ms. RIVAS. Mr. Speaker, here we are in the first voting week of 2026, and Republicans are bringing up bills on showerheads. They are not doing anything to address the affordability crisis, ICE terrorizing our communities, Trump’s illegal and unconstitutional actions in Venezuela, or other states of emergency. They have not done so during this Congress, even during the Los Angeles wildfires, which broke out 1 year ago today.

These fires destroyed 16,000 structures, displaced over 200,000 residents, and took 31 lives. The bravery of firefighters from across the country, who worked tirelessly to put out the fires and minimize damage, will not be forgotten.

While the fires caused great destruction and devastation, the strength and resilience of our neighbors coming together for our communities were on full display.

Mr. Speaker, 1 year later, communities across Los Angeles County are continuing to work toward rebuilding their lives and livelihoods. As communities work toward a return to normal times, we need to minimize the long-term health consequences that wildfire debris may have on communities, especially in communities like mine in the San Fernando Valley.

My district is housing several disposal sites for wildfire debris. As debris is being transported and stored throughout the valley, I have been adamant about making sure that my constituents are not subjected to the long-term health effects that they have traditionally been forced to bear.

Recovery from these wildfires asks us to look ahead to make sure that when natural disasters strike, everyone can be prepared to recover equally. This is a core tenet of environmental justice. We must invest in resources that allow communities and families to recover and rebuild their lives after disasters. This includes advocating for solutions that are informed by the voices of those who are most affected by climate disasters.

Los Angeles has made progress in recovery, but we still have a long way to go. This is why my California Democratic Caucus colleagues and I are urging the Trump administration to deliver nearly \$34 billion in disaster funding to help Californians recover. This includes funding that supports rebuilding homes and schools, restoring critical road and water systems, reopening small businesses, and helping communities achieve lasting wildfire resilience.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to push to make sure that residents in my district and across Los Angeles County have every Federal resource available to them to rebuild their lives. Let us continue to rebuild with equity, care, and courage so that our communities are safer, healthier, and more resilient for everyone.

□ 1030

HONORING THE SERVICE OF COLONEL PATRICK FLOOD

(Mr. BACON of Nebraska was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Colonel Patrick Flood, United States Air Force retired, who recently departed the House of Representatives as our deputy chief of staff and national security advisor after more than 39 years of Federal service.

Colonel Flood comes from a family with a distinguished record of Federal and military service dating back to the American Civil War.

Born in Baltimore, Colonel Flood was raised in Ohio and entered military service at the age of 18. He was nominated in 1986 to attend the United States Air Force Academy by Representative Ralph Regula of Ohio’s 16th Congressional District.

A distinguished graduate of the Academy, Pat established an early reputation for excellence in military leadership, academics, and athletics.

In his senior year at the Academy, Flood commanded Cadet Squadron 33 and was honored as one of the top squadron commanders in the cadet wing.

As a commissioned officer, Colonel Flood’s remarkable career spanned more than 26 years in the combat air forces and special operations communities. Serving in nearly every major U.S. military operation since 1991, Colonel Flood deployed for operations Southern Watch, Provide Comfort II, Deny Flight/Provide Promise, Uphold Democracy, Enduring Freedom, and Odyssey Dawn.

His distinguished record also includes two tours of duty in Korea with service as a corridor patrol officer for the eastern demilitarized zone, service as a continuity of operations officer for the Air Force Chief of Staff during the 9/11 attacks on the Pentagon, and aviation duty as an RC-135 crewmember flying long-range combat operations over Afghanistan.

Selected to lead several of the Air Force's most engaged combat intelligence units from 2006 to 2013, Colonel Flood commanded the 55th Wing's 488th Intelligence Squadron at RAF Mildenhall, England; led the 603rd Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Division at Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany; and commanded Distributed Ground Station 2 and the 548th Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group at Beale Air Force Base, California.

Following my election to the House in 2016, I invited Pat to help me establish our Washington, D.C., office. We both arrived in Congress in January of 2017 with no prior legislative experience. Without hesitation or any formal training, for the next 9 years Pat selflessly committed himself to learning and mastering Congress' complex legislative processes. Pat personally drafted hundreds of legislative bills and amendments, shaping America's national defense policy, force structure, and capabilities.

The results of his efforts have been remarkable with a significant number of his proposals enacted into law via the National Defense Authorization Act and the Defense Appropriations Act from the years 2018 to 2025.

While by no means exhaustive, here are some of the accomplishments: quality of life reforms for the all-volunteer force and military families; comprehensive management reforms for DOD's electromagnetic spectrum superiority policy; numerous casualty assistance policies; program reforms for Gold Star and surviving families; the first DOD program for integrated military-civilian national emergency medical response; the reconstruction of Offutt Air Force Base following the devastating 2019 floods; the DOD's Warfighter Brain Health Initiative; the elimination of Russian fuel at U.S. military installations in Europe; the significant expansion of the EA-37B Compass Call electronic attack combat aircraft fleet; academic copyright ownership for civilian faculty members of DOD academic institutions; direct support to military service academy foundations; sustained funding for the Baltic Security Initiative; and significant funding to establish the first secure software development facility to modernize our aging nuclear command, control, and communications enterprise.

However, these legislative victories only tell a small part of the story of the impact Pat has had. As my closest and most trusted adviser, he turned my intent and aspirations as a member of the Committee on Armed Services into legislative action that delivered tangible progress and results for DOD, Nebraska, and for the men and women who commit, and sometimes sacrifice, their lives for our security and the defense of our freedom.

I was selected multiple times as the most effective Member of Congress, and I owe much of this to Pat Flood.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Pat for his years of service to our great Nation.

#### RISING HEALTHCARE COSTS

(Mrs. SYKES of Ohio was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today I rise because families in Ohio's 13th Congressional District and across the country are already paying the price for Republicans' inaction on healthcare. The enhanced ACA premium tax credits expired December 31, 2025, and now health coverage is more expensive and families are already feeling the impact.

In my district, 90 percent of the 32,000 people who get ACA coverage rely on those subsidies. Four out of five were previously able to find plans for \$10 or less per month. That safety net is now gone. Families are seeing premiums jump by hundreds of dollars a month or thousands of dollars a year. Across the country, more than 4 million Americans have already lost or are at risk of losing their healthcare coverage entirely.

This isn't a theory. It is happening right now. In Canton, AultCare, a regional insurer tied to Aultman Hospital, stopped offering some individual family and small business ACA plans before December 31. That affects 6,000 people in my district. These are working families and small business employees losing coverage because Republicans refuse to act.

I have fought to protect these credits by cosponsoring legislation to extend them and by signing on to Leader JEFFRIES' discharge petition to bring the issue to a vote on the House floor. Instead of acting, Speaker JOHNSON and House Republicans chose to delay, and that action is simply unacceptable.

Don't just take my word for it. Just a few weeks ago, Congressman MIKE LAWLER called Speaker JOHNSON's refusal to allow a vote idiotic and political malpractice, and I agree. What happened? Speaker JOHNSON sent us home for the holidays while American families paid the price.

Republicans also pushed a partisan healthcare bill that would make things much worse by increasing the number of uninsured people, shifting costs onto working families, and weakening the protections that so many Americans rely upon.

I offered an amendment to protect working families from losing health coverage and to protect access to reproductive healthcare. But guess what. Republicans blocked it. Once again, they chose politics over people.

We cannot forget the real people caught in the middle of this. These are families deciding between healthcare and groceries and between medicine and rent. Access to healthcare should be a right, not a gamble. At a time when we are talking about the horrors and tragic costs of the drug trade and the impact it has on American people, let us not forget how people get drug

treatment. It is from the Medicaid program that has already been cut by a trillion dollars and the ACA marketplace health plans.

The Republicans' failure to act is literally going to kill people across this country. They let deadlines pass, premiums rise, and coverage disappear. That is not leadership. That is failure.

Mr. Speaker, the choice is clear. Congress can either act to restore affordable healthcare or we can continue to let premiums soar, coverage vanish, and families face financial ruin.

I know one thing is for certain, Mr. Speaker. I was brought to Congress to work on behalf of the people of Ohio's 13th Congressional District to lower costs, to keep them safe, and to make sure that they had affordable, accessible healthcare coverage.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage every single Member of this Chamber to do those things, not only for the people in my district but for the people all across America who are asking and needing Congress to act.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERT L. KNIPRATH

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

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Robert Kniprath who was proudly recognized as October's Brevard County Veteran of the Month.

Mr. Kniprath answered our Nation's call during World War II, serving in the United States Navy in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. As a petty officer second class, he carried out vital responsibilities supporting critical naval operations that contributed to Allied success in the Southwest Pacific. His service earned him multiple commendations, including the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, the Philippine Liberation Medal, and the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal.

After his military service, Mr. Kniprath built a life rooted in family, hard work, and community in Brevard County. He was known as a devoted father, husband, and grandfather, and as a man who deeply believed in civic duty, the importance of voting to safeguard our Republic and our democratic values.

Mr. Speaker, Brevard County and our Nation are stronger because of patriots like Robert Kniprath.

#### RECOGNIZING DEBBY ELLEN MOONE

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary Floridian and patriot, Debby Ellen Moone. She was named Brevard County's November Veteran of the Month.

Captain Moone dedicated 32 years of her life to serving our Nation in uniform, answering the call in both the United States Air Force and the United States Army. After serving 22 years in the United States Air Force and rising