

Implementing this tax will hurt job creators in Washington State, hurt our innovative economy, hurt our family farms, hurt job creation, and hurt growth.

In the Federal Government we have a better record. Again, I voted for the largest tax reduction in history joining my Republican colleagues. The Democrats and Governor Ferguson in Olympia need to learn this lesson, not go even deeper into our pocketbooks and drive even more job creators out of the State.

My message to Governor Ferguson is this: Get spending under control. Stop taxing the good people of Washington State.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MATTHEW J. FISHER

(Mr. KENNEDY of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Matthew J. Fisher, a pillar of south Buffalo, who tragically passed away on December 12, 2025, at the age of 57.

Born and raised in south Buffalo by his parents, Richard Sr. and Joann, Matt grew up surrounded by family, friends, and the close-knit parish of St. Ambrose Catholic Church. It was there that he built lifelong friendships and learned what it meant to belong to a community rooted in shared responsibility to one another.

A graduate of Canisius High School and Buffalo State University, he studied in the community that raised him, carrying those lessons with him throughout his life.

Matt was a loving husband, a devoted father, a man of deep faith and a humble voice for good whose impact will continue to be felt in our community for generations.

He lived out his values through acts of service, compassion, and an unwavering belief that making the world a better place begins in our neighborhoods, in our houses of worship, and in the everyday moments where dignity and care matter most.

That sense of belonging stayed with him his entire life and guided his decision to raise his own family in the very same neighborhood that raised him.

Matt was a devout Catholic, an active parishioner, and a eucharistic minister who lived his faith outwardly. He prayed for those who were struggling. He showed up for those in need, and he treated everyone he encountered with authenticity, humility, and genuine care.

Matt's spirit of service defined his professional pursuits as a housing and economic development professional. Whether working for Erie County, the city of Buffalo, or organizations like the Old First Ward Community Association, Matt devoted his career to public service. Because of his work, countless families in western New York were able to remain in their homes, in-

vest in their families, and navigate systems that are often overwhelming and complex.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Matt's heart was firmly planted in our community. Matt served as chairman of the South Buffalo Neighborhood Accountability Board and founded South Buffalo CREW, Concerned Residents Engaged in Work.

In those roles, Matt championed grassroots initiatives that focused on beautifying our neighborhood and supporting our small businesses.

As president of South Buffalo Baseball, he mentored countless young people. He was committed to keeping the program affordable, inclusive, and rooted in the neighborhood because he believed every child deserved a place to belong.

Matt Fisher's legacy reminds us that the soul of this country is found in people who live extraordinary lives of service and the neighbors who coach little league teams, check in on the elderly, serve at their parish, and quietly make their community stronger day by day.

To his beloved wife, Dina, and to their children Joseph, Hannah, Anthony, Veronica, Nicholas, and Aidan: Our community, State, and Nation mourns with you.

South Buffalo and western New York are stronger because of Matt Fisher. Our community and our country are better because of him.

May we carry forward his example and care for our neighbors with the same faith, generosity, and love that Matthew J. Fisher showed us every single day. May he rest in peace.

PROUD ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce that through community project funding, my team and I have secured \$3 million for southeast Iowa, delivering targeted investments in public safety, water infrastructure, and housing development.

These investments include: \$500,000 for the SAFECity Initiative in Oskaloosa, bringing advanced public safety technology to the community to help prevent crime, improve emergency response times, and keep Oskaloosa residents safe; \$2 million for the Pa-poose Creek Redundant Force Main in Muscatine to support a critical water infrastructure upgrade. This will protect homes, improve flood control, support growth, and strengthen environmental safety for years to come.

I also secured \$750,000 for the Veterans District sewer project in Knoxville to help build a sanitary lift station and storm and sewer lines to serve more than 110 acres of future housing in the Veterans District.

With these historic investments, I have now secured over \$8 million for southeast Iowa and will continue fight-

ing to secure all the Federal resources our communities need and deserve.

RECOGNIZING HALEY DEGREVE

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Haley DeGreve, founder and president of The Gray Matters Collective, and local leader Jon Zumkehr for their partnership in raising awareness about mental health and suicide prevention among correctional officers and law enforcement officers.

Their work became a lifeline for many after the tragic death by suicide of correctional officer Blake Schwarz who worked at Thomson Federal Prison but lived in Iowa, a loss that rocked our community and exposed the silent suffering of so many who serve behind the walls.

In the aftermath, Jon Zumkehr, an 18-year veteran of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, reached out to Haley and invited her to Thomson. She shared her own journey of survival and hope, speaking openly about her struggles and recovery and the realities that far too many correctional officers face in silence, many of whom are former military veterans.

On August 28, Haley nearly became another statistic, believing suicide was her only way out of pain. Instead, she chose to fight and founded The Gray Matters Collective, a nonprofit with chapters for veterans and first responders. She has listened to hundreds of stories like her own and like Blake's, and she has made it her mission to break the stigma and offer real support.

Jon and Haley's partnership has made a real difference. Together, they have sent 24 officers at Thomson to ASSIST training, organized suicide prevention walks, and led multiple staff recalls focused on mental health and resources. They have also created a law enforcement support group open to all staff with licensed counselors and free to anyone who needs it.

After Blake's death, I was honored to sit down with Jon and work to introduce Correctional Officer Blake Schwarz Suicide Prevention Act, legislation aimed at providing the resources and recognition our correctional officers deserve. I thank Jon and Haley for their courage, compassion, and relentless advocacy bringing attention to this very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I want to wish a very happy birthday to my nephew, Andrew Martino.

Happy birthday, Andrew.

□ 1030

CITIZENS UNITED 16TH ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. MORELLE of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the 16th anniversary of the United States Supreme Court's Citizens United decision, a decision that

disfigured our political landscape, re-orienting power away from voters and toward corporate and wealthy special interests.

In *Citizens United*, a 5-4 conservative Court majority endorsed almost unlimited political spending by corporations and wealthy individuals, and alongside several subsequent Federal Court rulings, demolished longstanding limits designed to prevent undue influence in our politics.

It is well beyond time for Congress to pass a comprehensive campaign finance reform package to protect our constituents from the widespread political corruption that *Citizens United* unleashed.

Since 2010, more than \$10 billion in corporate and dark money has saturated every aspect of our politics. Super-PACs and dark money groups now spend vast sums to influence, and sometimes determine, election outcomes while shielding their donors from public scrutiny. Compounding the problem, the Federal Election Commission has too often failed to enforce the law, leaving voters vulnerable and unable to discern who is trying to influence them and why.

We know that transparency is a baseline requirement for a functioning democracy. We know, too, that its absence erodes public trust in politics and fuels the belief that the system is rigged for wealthy elites and insiders. Most troubling, however, is that *Citizens United* threatens to compromise the incentives of those of us who serve in public office.

House campaigns now require previously unimaginable sums of money. Members spend far too much time courting wealth or corporate donors rather than engaging with constituents.

Americans reasonably question whether this imbalance helps explain why policies related to taxes, healthcare, corporate regulation, and environmental protection so often favor powerful interests over working families, families who are struggling with an affordability crisis that this administration has exacerbated.

While *Citizens United* greatly harmed our body politic, we will not let it prove fatal. In a 1938 address to Congress, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued a stark warning: “. . . the liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than the democratic state itself.”

House Democrats recognize the fierce urgency of this warning. At the request of Leader HAKEEM JEFFRIES, I am coordinating a comprehensive anticorruption legislative agenda to restore fairness, transparency, and a requisite principle of our Republic, that government must serve the people, not the highest bidder.

This sweeping agenda will address corruption across all three branches of government as well as, critically, un-

fettered corporate influence in our broken campaign finance system.

The package will include pieces of legislation that House Democrats have long championed, like the DISCLOSE Act, that will shine a light on the dark money donors that seek to purchase the outcomes of our elections. It will fundamentally reform the FEC, so our Federal campaign finance laws no longer go unenforced.

Indeed, at present, the FEC has no quorum and cannot function in a law enforcement capacity at all. House Democrats will put a cop back on the beat.

Vitaly, House Democrats will move to ratify a constitutional amendment to overturn the horrific *Citizens United* decision.

House Democrats will ensure this package reflects the pressing reform interests of Americans from coast to coast, Americans who demand an end to the culture of corruption endemic in Washington.

While *Citizens United* did not create every problem in our politics, it has undeniably enhanced the power of the wealthiest few at the expense of the many. When a single billionaire spends more on an election than countless thousands of voters combined, the principle that every voice counts equally in our political system withers. We must, and we can, remedy the rot at the deeply misguided *Citizens United* decision introduced into American politics.

As ranking member of the Committee on House Administration, the committee with jurisdiction over campaign finance legislation, I look forward to continuing to work to restore trust and honesty to American governance.

RECOGNIZING THE SCARSDALE FORUM

(Mr. LATIMER of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the civic commitment of an organization of active and concerned citizens in Scarsdale who labor to involve everyday residents in the important issues of the day, the Scarsdale Forum.

The organization traces its roots back over 120 years to 1904, with a charitable and educational mission at its core. The forum sponsors events and seminars addressing the issues, choices, and solutions that directly impact the community. The floor committees study substantive issues, produce reports for discussion, and interact directly with elected officials.

The leadership team, President Jill Spielberg, Vice President Karen Brew, along with Elaine Weir, Madelaine Eppenstein, and a large cadre of talented neighbors in key roles, provide a strong base of abilities all committed to the benefit of Scarsdale.

From the floor of the House of Representatives, we salute the men and

women of the Scarsdale Forum who have made the level of voluntary, active citizenship envisioned by our Founding Fathers come to life in the village of Scarsdale.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S ATTACKS ON FAMILIES

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the Trump administration's recent attack on childcare and family assistance. This administration has decided to freeze funding for three critical programs in New York and four other Democratic States. As usual, they are putting their politically motivated agenda on full display.

The targeted programs include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, the Child Care and Development Fund, and the Social Services Block Grant program. This move threatens over \$3.4 billion in annual funds that New York depends upon to provide critical resources, including childcare, public assistance, domestic violence services, homeless shelters, and emergency payments for families and children.

This action only serves to intensify the massive affordability crisis that New York and the rest of the country continue to face. Playing politics with people's lives, let alone vulnerable children and families, is unacceptable.

While this administration continues its cruel and vengeful behavior, my Democratic colleagues and I remain committed to protecting vulnerable children and families.

POLIO RESURGENCE AND ROTARY

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I address this Chamber today as a longtime member of Rotary International. Rotary's top priority is eradication of the deadly disease, polio. Its members have invested billions of dollars and countless volunteer hours in polio vaccination campaigns in countries around the world.

In 1988, Rotary helped to create the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, a partnership with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the Gates Foundation, and the vaccine alliance, Gavi, with additional critical funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development, which no longer exists. Yet the entire effort is threatened by the administration's plan to defund key GPEI partners.

Just at the time when this disease is closer than ever to being eradicated, the risk of outbreaks is greatly increased. We must do all in our power to protect the gains already made, and finish the job, including appropriating the funds required.

People from my generation remember the terrible consequences of polio, often paralysis and even death for those with this highly contagious disease. Many Americans still live with long-term post-polio syndrome.

Still, outbreaks continue around the world and other countries that are just a plane ride away. Complete eradication depends on continued vaccination of children everywhere and constant surveillance.