

college sport. For generations, the Big Ten was known as the Midwestern Conference. In recent decades, that identity has slowly been eroded as coastal schools were admitted in the name of more revenue and higher profits.

Now private equity is looking to buy college sports revenue streams. If these deals are normalized, it is only a matter of time before private investors demand control over our university athletic departments. This creates the risk of further conference realignment, cutting nonrevenue sports, and expanding for-profit influence over universities.

This is why I have sent a letter with my Republican colleagues to end the NCAA.

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#### REMEMBERING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF NATALIE HASLAM

(Mr. BURCHETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURCHETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today remembering the life and the legacy of a dear lady, Natalie Haslam, who passed away on January 16. Natalie set the true example of what it means to be a volunteer. She spent her life giving back to our community and the people who are in it, and, of course, to our great University of Tennessee.

Born in 1931, Natalie was raised in Knoxville and graduated from UT in 1953. In 1974, she married Jim Haslam, the owner and founder of Pilot Company. She is known for her leadership and philanthropy. Natalie became the first woman to serve as the chair of the East Tennessee Foundation Board in 1987.

I always remember Ms. Haslam when my dad died. I was at the mortuary, actually, with my mama picking out my dad's casket. Big Jim and Natalie called me and told me that everything would be all right and if I needed anything, just to call. I also remember when Mr. Haslam and I would be at events together. She would always shush us and then just give us a smile.

While serving the Knoxville community, her commitments to the University of Tennessee remained unmatched. Natalie and Jim through the Haslam Foundation donated \$32 million to UT with \$10 million going toward the Natalie L. Haslam Music Center. It is one of the finest music centers not just in the State of Tennessee or the country, but the world, Mr. Speaker.

Natalie is survived by her husband, Jim; three granddaughters; three stepchildren; six grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. She was a true humanitarian. She will always be remembered as someone in east Tennessee who gave back to a place where she lived and loved. I will always remember her as a very classy lady.

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#### CONGRATULATING ISABEAU LEVITO

(Mr. CONAWAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate my constituent, Isabeau Levito, who officially qualified for the U.S. Olympic figure skating team where she will represent Team USA at the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan, Italy, next month.

Isabeau Levito grew up in south Jersey, training for years at the Igloo Ice Center in Mount Laurel.

Long before the spotlight, she was on the ice before sunrise, balancing schoolwork, family time, and relentless practice with remarkable discipline and grace.

This month, Isabeau achieved a lifelong dream. After earning a bronze medal at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships in St. Louis, she officially qualified for Team USA and will represent our country at the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan, Italy.

Isabeau joins what experts are already calling the strongest U.S. women's Olympic skating team in decades, and she stands proudly among the best.

We are incredibly proud of her. On behalf of south Jersey, we wish Isabeau Levito the very best as she skates for the gold and for Team USA.

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#### NATIONAL BLOOD DONOR MONTH

(Mr. WIED asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WIED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of January as National Blood Donor Month. Each winter, blood centers across the Nation experience reduced donor turnout, while the need for blood remains constant.

In the United States, someone requires a blood transfusion every 2 seconds to treat patients facing trauma, surgeries, childbirth complications, cancer, chronic conditions, and so much more, yet our blood supply remains critically low.

Because of the urgent and ongoing need for blood donations, I recently introduced H.R. 5791, the Boosting Lifesaving Operations, Opening Donation Centers Act, or the BLOOD Centers Act, alongside my Democratic colleague, Congresswoman SCHRIER.

This commonsense, bipartisan legislation would streamline the bureaucratic burdens of opening a new blood center while still ensuring oversight and safety in donation facilities and of the blood they collect.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the BLOOD Centers Act so we can expedite the ability of blood centers to open new locations and collect lifesaving blood for those who need it.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I also want to encourage everyone listening today to consider taking the time to donate blood if you are able to. First-time donors are always welcome, and every donation has the power to save a life.

#### PERKINS HIGH SCHOOL STEM ACHIEVEMENT

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, last week I visited Perkins High School in Sandusky, Ohio. My role: to celebrate excellence in STEM education.

This year, Kia Preston won the Ninth Congressional District App Challenge for a project titled "Light Teachings."

Kia's interactive app helps users understand fundamentals of ray tracing, a computer graphics technique that simulates how light interacts with objects to create realistic images in video platforms.

Kia's app will be honored here in our Nation's Capital later this year.

I also paid tribute to the school's robotics club that has partnered with NASA. They were the only high school in the United States of America selected alongside other higher education institutions like MIT.

Bravo Perkins.

After 4 school years building a satellite named "Foras Promineo," which is Latin for "outreach," it was launched to the International Space Station back in September.

Thanks to computer science teacher Mike Leffler and Robotics Club adviser John Stout for lighting the way for these bright, young minds who are going to lead America into the future and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I am just so proud of them.

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□ 1700

#### REMEMBERING LENARD CONKLIN

(Mr. LAWLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Lenard Conklin, a devoted son of Stony Point who lived a life defined by service, tradition, and deep community roots.

Lenard was a lifelong resident, living in the very home his great-grandfather built on Gate Hill Road. Lenard was known as the last hay baler of Rockland County.

Lenard proudly served our Nation during the Vietnam war as a Navy Seabee, his dream position. In 2024, he was honored on the Hudson Valley Honor Flight, Mission 34, in Washington, D.C. His commitment to hard work and service continued at home, where he spent 31 years at Algonquin Gas before retiring from the Stony Point Sewer Plant.

Whether sharing stories of his time in service, his love of the Catskill Mountains, his passion for trout fishing and hunting, or doting on the love of his life, Nora, his presence made a difference in the lives of everyone he met.

I extend my deepest condolences to his siblings, stepdaughters, grandchildren, and the countless friends who knew him. May God bless his memory.

#### HONORING RICHARD J. CODEY

(Ms. POU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. POU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of former New Jersey Governor and longtime State Senator Richard Codey, known to all of us as Dick Codey, a public servant whose 50 years of public service remain unmatched in our State's rich history.

Dick Codey believed deeply in service, and he practiced it with heart. Dick was a champion for people living with mental illness long before it was widely acknowledged or understood. He was willing to go further than most, even going undercover in a psychiatric hospital to ensure dignity for those of us too often forgotten.

As Governor, he brought steadiness and integrity during a difficult moment for New Jersey, in return earning extraordinary trust from the public.

What defined Dick for me was his common touch. He returned constituents' calls himself. He conversed in diner booths late at night. He coached youth basketball. He never stopped being the same person, no matter the title he held.

I had the privilege of serving with Dick Codey in Trenton and of calling him my friend. He cared so deeply about the people he represented and the institution that he served.

New Jersey is better because of Dick Codey's life and work. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

#### EPIDEMIC OF WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE

(Mr. KENNEDY of Utah asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the epidemic of waste, fraud, and abuse that is ripping off taxpayers with impunity.

Too often, Congress forgets that every dollar of government money collected comes from an American who worked hard for it. That is why waste, fraud, and abuse are not abstract problems. They are real problems that hurt real people.

When government programs pay twice for the same service, fund projects that never get built, or lose track of billions, taxpayers suffer and confidence in government weakens.

We need to honor hardworking families by pursuing the bad actors with a vengeance. Stewardship is our sacred responsibility.

We just found out about a case in my own district where an individual was collecting her dead mother's Social Security checks for 3 years. Her blatant

fraud was finally discovered, and she was sentenced and ordered to repay \$25,000 in restitution. This case is not isolated. The Government Accountability Office estimates that the Federal Government loses up to \$521 billion to fraud every single year.

The American people expect honesty, fiscal discipline, and respect for their sacrifice. I am proud of the Republican Conference for doing just that.

#### BROWN STUDENTS RETURN TO CAMPUS

(Mr. AMO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. AMO. Mr. Speaker, today, students returned to class at Brown University to start a new semester after the mass shooting in December that took the lives of Ella Cook and Mukhammad Aziz Umurzokov and injured nine other students.

My thoughts remain with the victims, their loved ones, and our whole community during what, I am sure, has been a difficult few days.

For the Brown students who returned to campus this week, I want them to know we have their backs, and we are all thinking of them. If anyone is struggling, they should reach out for help.

As Brown, Providence, and Rhode Island continue to heal, I join countless others in making sure our community, our city, and our State have all the support we need to recover. We are on a long journey, but I know we are on it together.

#### HONORING SETH NESMITH

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Seth NeSmith, a registered nurse at Atrium Health Navicent, who has been named one of the 2025 Hospital Heroes recipients by the Georgia Hospital Association.

This award recognizes the top three hospital employees or volunteers from GHA-member hospitals who dedicate their time to improving both their organization and the world around them.

Mr. NeSmith has impressively received a registered nurse degree, bachelor of science in nursing, stroke certified registered nurse credential, and critical care registered nurse certifications.

Mr. NeSmith was also awarded last year's Atrium Health Navicent's DAISY Award for noticing a vehicle stuck deep in a ditch, pulling the victim out, and providing immediate further care.

Mr. NeSmith's leadership is vital for shaping the next generation of healthcare professionals who will go on to serve communities across Georgia.

This recognition speaks to his extensive skills and expertise in nursing.

We appreciate Mr. NeSmith's commitment to hard work, compassion for everyone around him, and going above and beyond for his patients.

#### RECOGNIZING ASHLYN GWYNN

(Mr. MOORE of Utah asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my constituent Ashlyn Gwynn, who was recently involved in a near-death car accident.

Ashlyn was recruited to play soccer at Cal State Fullerton. This past September, on her way to another sporting event, she and her teammate Lauren were struck by a truck. Both were transported to the hospital, but Lauren tragically passed away after 6 weeks of intensive care. Her family's words were: "Lauren fell asleep in the Lord." Lauren's legacy of goodness and positivity will always be remembered.

After Ashlyn stabilized, doctors let her family know that there was a strong possibility that she may never regain consciousness. If she ever were to, it was possible that she would never walk or talk again.

Thankfully, Ashlyn has made significant signs of improvement. She was transferred to a step-down rehabilitation unit, and through the generosity of a close friend of her father, she has been transported back to Utah, where she continues to receive physical and speech therapy and close care from her parents.

I don't know Ashlyn, but I know her parents, and Matt and Shelly Gwynn are the best people I have ever known. I am so fortunate to have gotten to know them in this role. He is a police chief back home as well as a State legislator, and they are giving her the best possible chance of success.

I wish Ashlyn the best.

#### HIGHLIGHTING REPUBLICAN SUCCESSES IN 2025

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. MOORE of Utah was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.)

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARIDOPOLOS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be joined by my colleagues in this Conference Special Order. To start us off, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. OWENS).

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, America is back, and so is common sense.