

of the phone who just needed help. That balance—the human side of governance, paired with professional excellence—is rare. That is what made her indispensable.

In moments of pressure, she was unflappable. In moments of disagreement, she brought thoughtfulness. In moments of decision, she was always guided by principle.

I have relied on her judgment more times than I can count. When I needed honest counsel, she gave it, even when it wasn't easy. When the office needed leadership, she stepped forward without hesitation. When the mission demanded long hours and personal sacrifice, she never asked for recognition. She simply got the job done.

That kind of leadership doesn't happen by accident. It comes with character, from experience, and from a deep belief in service before self.

Her impact extends well beyond my office. She has mentored young staffers who will go on to serve in Congress, the executive branch, and communities across the country. Her legacy lives on in the people she has trained, the standards she has set, and the example she modeled every day.

Public service is often described as thankless. Too often the people who give the most receive the least public recognition, and today we correct that.

Ms. Lee has helped shape legislation, supported veterans, solved real problems for real people, and strengthened this institution. She has done so with professionalism, humility, and unwavering commitment.

On behalf of the constituents of the Eighth Congressional District of Texas, on behalf of my staff, and on behalf of a Member of Congress, I want to thank her.

Her service has mattered, her leadership has made a difference, and her example will continue to guide us long after she steps away from this role. As she begins the next chapter of her life, she leaves with our deepest respect, our sincere gratitude, and our very best wishes.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RICK GARCÍA

(Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Rick García, a giant in the fight for equality in Illinois.

I met Rick in the 1980s when being out, visible, and unapologetic came with real risk. We used to call each other primos or cousins because we shared the same last name.

Rick believed that change didn't happen by accident and worked across political, religious, and community lines to build unlikely coalitions. He helped pass Illinois' landmark ban on discrimination based on sexual orientation.

As a cofounder of Equality Illinois, Rick fought to ensure that love and

identity are never grounds for discrimination.

Rick's legacy lives on in the movement he helped build and the laws he helped pass, which are now as important as ever.

May we honor his legacy in action. May Rick rest in power.

LOSING BENEFITS

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the price of groceries keeps going up. Starting this week, 4 million people per month will be pushed off their food stamps. In Illinois alone, 360,000 people will lose those benefits. All due to cuts from the big, ugly bill.

Americans are being forced to go hungry so the President can pay for his terror campaign in our cities. Children, people with disabilities, and veterans will lose their ability to put food on the table.

Food pantries are already seeing longer lines for services. Local grocers warn that this will impact them, too, as people will be unable to shop for food. SNAP benefits are not just a safety net. They also foster economic activity and community stability.

The President has made his priorities clear by cutting food assistance for millions of Americans to fund his agenda, while families are pushed closer to hunger.

They can lie, tell us to ignore what we see and experience, but the American people will not forget.

SUPPORTING SAFETY NET SERVICES

(Mr. ARRINGTON of Texas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. ARRINGTON. Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, my Democratic colleagues—maybe not all of them, but what I just heard—gave a complete mischaracterization of the program integrity measures that Republicans put in the big, beautiful bill. While the fraud, waste, and abuse is on display for all Americans, not only in Minnesota, but all across this country, we find it unacceptable. We believe that one of our first responsibilities here in the people's House is to steward the people's sacred treasure.

We put financial controls, anti-fraud measures, and, again, program integrity reforms so that people who need these safety net programs can avail themselves. They will not be drained anymore by people who are illegally in this country, ineligible, or who are able-bodied adults who just simply refuse to work. That is all. I mean, I think that is, as we say, an 80-20 issue in this country.

No, people aren't starving and being thrown into the streets with no support who need it. We are protecting and preserving not only the tax dollar, but these important critical safety net services for the American people who are eligible.

I am grateful for that leadership from the President and from my Re-

publican colleagues. I can't imagine that most Democrats throughout this country actually support us protecting their tax dollars, too.

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HONORING J.L. STEVENS ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true west Texas giant and American hero, Mr. J.L. Stevens of Big Spring, USA, a World War II veteran who just turned 100 years old this past week. He is a living monument to the grit, courage, quiet humility, and service that define both west Texas and America's Greatest Generation.

In 1943, at just 17 years old, Mr. Speaker, this gentleman enlisted in the United States Navy, serving as a gunner's mate aboard the USS *Hambleton*, where he directly engaged the enemy on D-day while supporting the Allied invasion of Normandy. Despite suffering combat injuries in Europe, Mr. Stevens continued his service, which concluded in 1945 in the Pacific theater, where he personally witnessed the signing of the Japanese Instrument of Surrender in Tokyo Harbor, bringing World War II to its official end.

After the war, Mr. Stevens returned to his home in west Texas, where he worked as a carpenter, helping to build the firehouse there in Big Spring and the city's original VA hospital.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. J.L. Stevens represents the very best of west Texas in his heroic service to our country and a lifetime of hard work, faith, and devotion to his family, his community, and this great country of ours. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing him a happy 100th birthday and thanking him for a legacy of service that will long endure.

Mr. Stevens, here is to many more. God bless you, and God bless America.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: HONORING HILLARD POUNCY

(Mrs. MCBATH of Georgia was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, this week began Black History Month. As second vice chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, I am proud to rise and put proper emphasis on this important annual recognition. All month long, I will be working to amplify the stories of notable Black Americans from Georgia's Sixth Congressional District.

Today, I am particularly honored to kick off my constituent recognition by sharing the story of a truly exceptional American. Dr. Hillard Pouncy, Jr., was a student, research scientist, and beloved father and grandfather. Perhaps most notably, he was one of the original Tuskegee Airmen during World War II.

Dr. Pouncy's accomplishments in life seem almost too extraordinary to be true. Born in Prichard, Alabama, Hillard lived with his grandparents to

support them for many years of his childhood, a glimpse of what life was like before the advent of Social Security.

In segregated Alabama, he navigated the obstacles required to receive an education. Hillard had to travel to a neighboring county in order to complete his high school education. This didn't faze Hillard. He finished as the valedictorian of his class.

After high school, he went to Tuskegee in search of work and the furtherance of his education. After seeing Black cadets march on campus and watching them fly airplanes, Hillard said that he just knew he would become a Tuskegee Airman. He loved the look of their uniforms and the promise of what kind of doors could be unlocked as a Tuskegee Airman.

Through advanced training, bombardier school, and navigation training, Hillard witnessed and experienced firsthand the obstacles and challenges that men of color faced, even as some of the most highly skilled members of our Nation's Armed Forces. Again, this did not faze him. He trained as a bombardier with the 477th Bombardment Group and was part of the remarkable history of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Following his military service, Dr. Pouncy earned advanced degrees in chemistry, obtaining a Ph.D. in organic chemistry. He enjoyed a long and distinguished career as a research scientist with Union Carbide, which took him all over the world.

In retirement, Dr. Pouncy and his late wife, Mrs. Mattie, retired to Austell, right in the heart of Georgia's Sixth Congressional District. As a beloved resident at Presbyterian Village, he always took time to give back to his fellow residents and schoolchildren in our community.

Dr. Pouncy passed away just before Christmas at the ripe age of 103. At his memorial service, I was struck by the stories that I heard of what a devoted public servant he remained long after he retired. Dr. Hillard Pouncy truly represented the very best of us.

Our Nation has come a very long way since the days of Jim Crow, and I marvel at the progress of our American life seen through the eyes of a truly original American citizen, a man like Hillard Pouncy.

Mr. SPEAKER. In 2014, Dr. Pouncy sat for an interview about his life. As he reflected on his pride watching his grandson graduate from one of the finest schools in the country, he chuckled and said, "Things are different now, for the better."

Thanks to the courageous service of Dr. Pouncy and his fellow Tuskegee Airmen, and Civil Rights Movement leaders like Dr. King and John Lewis, yes, things are different now, for the better. And though we face a great many challenges at this moment of our American story, we owe a debt of gratitude to a man like Dr. Hillard Pouncy. As we prepare to mark what would have been Dr. Pouncy's 104th birthday on February 8th, I rejoice that such a wonderful man was able to walk this earth for over a century. All Black History

Month long and beyond, I will continue to do all that I can to uplift the name of Dr. Pouncy and every man and woman who has made such significant contributions to the advancement of this great nation. We are truly better off because they were here among us.

RECOGNIZING 1984 WALLA WALLA HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mr. BAUMGARTNER of Washington was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 1984 Walla Walla High School girls' basketball team and to celebrate the long-overdue recognition of their State championship victory.

The 1979 and 1984 Walla Walla High girls' teams remain the only State basketball champions in Wa-Hi history. Yet, for more than four decades, the 1984 champions have had no victory cup to mark their achievement.

What began as a casual conversation last spring has turned into the long-awaited correction of that injustice. This Saturday, after 42 years, the 1984 team will finally be recognized with a ceremony and the presentation of a specially made championship trophy.

These remarkable women represent the best of our communities: perseverance, teamwork, and pride that will stand the test of time. Now, finally, they will have a victory cup to recognize their significant achievement.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to give a shout-out to the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin for covering this story. It is a reminder that while we can sometimes be frustrated with the way media covers things politically, we always appreciate a local news source for these types of stories.

RECOGNIZING DRIVER AND LINDSEY FAMILIES OF PEND OREILLE COUNTY

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Driver and Lindsey families of Pend Oreille County, whose century-long story tells the very best of rural America: perseverance, hard work, and renewal.

Their history stretches from a hand-built homestead in the 1920s, through decades of loss and reclamation, to today's 800-acre hay operation that continues to be an anchor in their community.

This year marks three remarkable milestones: 100 years since the original home was built, 80 years since the farm was reclaimed, and 20 years since the current operation began.

The Driver and Lindsey families embody stewardship and resilience. They have tilled the same soil for generations, adapting through challenge and change, ensuring this family legacy. Pictured to the right of me today is one of the fifth generation of the Driver family, and we know that he has much to look forward to as he builds his community on this wonderful family farm.

CELEBRATING 145TH ANNIVERSARY OF SPOKANE TRIBE OF INDIANS

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 145th anniversary of the Spokane Tribe of Indians, a proud milestone honoring one of eastern Washington's oldest and most resilient communities.

The Spokane Tribe recently hosted its 1881 Powwow near Wellpinit, bringing together families, dancers, and community members to mark this anniversary with song, dance, and fellowship. The day was filled with vibrant drumming, traditional ceremonies, and shared meals that reflected the enduring spirit of the Tribe.

As the American flag and the Spokane Tribe flag flew side by side, this celebration stood as a powerful symbol of unity, resilience, and the living heritage that continues to enrich the inland northwest.

Mr. Speaker, I am not a Native Tribal member myself, but growing up in eastern Washington, I did have time to spend playing basketball with the Nez Perce Tribe of Indians in Lapwai, close to my family home. On several occasions, I was able to join and observe powwows.

Mr. Speaker, if anyone in Congress or watching at home has not had the opportunity to attend a powwow, it truly is one of the best celebrations of our shared culture and history. It is something that all Americans should attempt to do as we celebrate our 250th anniversary.

I close by again congratulating the Spokane Tribe of Indians on their leadership, tradition, and community pride.

SALUTING SCARSDALE

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

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, in the ever-changing landscape of community media, I am pleased to salute the 17th anniversary of the launch of Scarsdale10583, the online source for local news and information in the village of Scarsdale and in the neighborhoods of Hartsdale and Edgemont in the town of Greenburgh.

Joanne Wallenstein, an advertising and marketing professional with a background in magazines and internet experience, is the driving force for the team that includes Wendy MacMillan and Stacie Waldman. All three are committed Scarsdale volunteers for organizations like the local PTAs, the League of Women Voters, and numerous other community groups. This gives them the grassroots contacts and feel for what is happening every day that they report on regularly. They report on what is happening by being there in person at event after event.

The publication is truly local: high school sports stories, local meetings, recreational activities, and neighborhood associations and their activities.

We recognize the hard work of Joanne and her colleagues, and from the