

Bruno and Lena DeGol produced a masonry plant in Cambria County.

Today, the DeGol Organization includes Seven D Wholesale, DeGol Carpet, Seven D Windows and Door, Hollidaysburg Rail Car Services, and the Scotch Valley Country Club.

In addition to driving economic growth and facilitating job creation, the DeGol Organization has supported communities through the Bruno and Lena DeGol Family Foundation. The foundation's philanthropy has funded numerous capital improvement projects, education initiatives, and nonprofit programs.

Mr. Speaker, with a distinguished legacy of leadership, I congratulate the entire DeGol family on this milestone anniversary and offer best wishes for continued success.

IT IS TIME FOR THE CORRUPTION TO END

(Mr. NEGUSE of Colorado was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. NEGUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to sound an alarm, to sound an alarm about something dangerous and dark and pernicious that is happening inside our government. I recognize there are only a handful of my colleagues in the Chamber to hear that alarm and a few folks in the gallery, but I pray that Americans writ large will hear it.

George Orwell in his famous book "1984" wrote of a time when "The party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, your essential command." His warning proved pressing because today the Trump administration asks the American people to ignore what they see with their own eyes and what they hear with their own ears, which is the complete corruption of their government from the inside out.

The Trump administration's pay-to-play schemes are literally ripping off hardworking American taxpayers as we speak. We see the evidence everywhere: A \$10 billion payout that Donald Trump, the President of the United States of America, now demands from his own Treasury Department in a lawsuit that he filed against the IRS.

By the way, who does he demand pay him this \$10 billion? The American taxpayer. The countless pay-to-play schemes and vanity projects that have consumed his administration, all paid by American taxpayers, are stripping the pocketbooks of Americans to line their own.

Last weekend, The New Yorker reported that the President and his family have raked in \$4 billion in personal profits by leveraging the Presidency. Let's think about that, \$4 billion.

The most salient example of this, by the way, we just learned about in the last 7 days. It was an expose by The Wall Street Journal about a scheme that the Trump administration engaged in last year.

The Trump family, according to these public reports, sold a 49 percent stake in their crypto company to a member of the Emirati royal family. They did so for nearly half a billion dollars.

We don't know every detail of this transaction. We do know that the Trump family received \$187 million from that transaction, a payday entangling the President's financial interests with a foreign country.

Months later, we know that the Trump administration approved a crypto deal with the UAE that included transferring advanced U.S. technology and AI chips.

Mr. Speaker, this is corruption, plain and simple.

It is the prioritization of personal profit over the national security interests of our country, the country we all love so dearly.

It is wrong. It is immoral, and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle say nothing. Worse, some of them defend this conduct, notwithstanding that they know it is unlawful, that it is violative of our Constitution.

We have an Emoluments Clause, Mr. Speaker, for a reason. The Foreign Emoluments Clause was one of the few provisions to survive and be transferred from the Articles of Confederation to the Constitution in 1787. It was contemplated for precisely a scenario as this one.

George Mason, one of our Founding Fathers during the Constitutional Convention, warned his fellow delegates that "if we do not provide against corruption, our government will soon be at an end." His words are as true today as they were when he said them 240 some-odd years ago.

It is shameful the lack of courage from my Republican colleagues. It is repugnant to the constitutional order that we all have been sworn to defend, to protect, and to vindicate.

The question I have, Mr. Speaker, for my Republican colleagues and for every American of good faith is: When is enough enough? How many sweetheart deals will Republicans refuse to condemn?

The corruption must end, Mr. Speaker. The corruption must end.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). The Chair reminds Members not to refer to persons in the gallery.

HAPPY 106TH BIRTHDAY TO HAZEL WOMBLE

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

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, let's go back to the year 1919. We had just 48 States. World War I had just ended but we called it the Great War because we didn't know there was going to be another. Charlie Chaplin had just released a short silent film called "Sunnyside," before talking pictures would be all the rage. In this very Chamber, the House voted to send the 19th Amendment, giving women the

right to vote, to the States for ratification.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 106th birthday of someone born that year, an American hero named Hazel Womble of Jacksonville, Florida, who is today one of our Nation's oldest living veterans. Here she is surrounded by friends and family.

Born on Christmas Eve in 1919, Hazel would go on to serve her country with extraordinary courage in World War II. Hazel enlisted in the Navy Reserves and served as an operating room nurse at U.S. naval hospitals from Portsmouth to Newport and even overseas in Bermuda.

In the darkest days of the war, she answered her country's call with the steady hands and a nurse's calm demeanor, holding the line not with a rifle but with a lifesaving skill and unwavering resolve.

She earned the World War II Victory Medal and the American Theater Ribbon, continuing her service to our Nation until her medical discharge in 1953.

At 106 years young, Hazel is not a page in our history book. She is a living chapter of American courage. Her life reflects a generation shaped by sacrifice, strengthened by service, and sustained by quiet resolve.

Mr. Speaker, we honor Hazel Womble not only for the years she has lived but the example she has set. Today, we celebrate an American who continues to inspire us all more than a century after her journey began. America is very proud of her.

Wishing Hazel a happy 106th birthday.

□ 1100

STOPPING UNREGULATED BIOLOGICAL LABORATORIES

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to a serious and growing public safety and public health concern that I think requires congressional action. It is the operation of illegal and unregulated biological laboratories that we see in communities throughout our country.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting legislation that I have introduced from the House committee recommendations. They are the Preventing Illegal Laboratories and Protecting Public Health Act and the STOP Health Threats Act.

Many of us became aware of this issue in the San Joaquin Valley in 2023 when an illegal biolab was discovered operating in my district in Reedley, California. Local officials uncovered a clandestine operation storing biological materials, laboratory equipment, medical waste, and dangerous, dangerous pathogens like malaria, like COVID, like HIV. There were thousands of laboratory mice in unsafe conditions.

All of this was inside a warehouse located near residential areas. It was not a licensed facility. It was operating in the shadows without proper licensing or permits. Why? Ostensibly, the reason was to develop medical kits for COVID testing and for pregnancy testing. Clearly, that was not the case.

Local authorities initially lacked the clear tools and resources to determine what hazards they were dealing with or how to safely respond. The situation placed local law enforcement officers, code enforcement staff, and nearby residents at serious risk.

It required coordination of local, State, and Federal agencies to fully assess the threat and dismantle this operation. It was slow in coming.

Now, over the weekend, some of my colleagues have probably noted a national story in Las Vegas, where there was the report of a discovery of a new lab and that materials were under investigation related to the illegal biolab that was created in 2023 in Reedley, California. This does not surprise me.

We cannot assume that communities across the country are immune from similar risks. Many jurisdictions simply do not have the expertise or Federal support needed to quickly identify and respond to unauthorized biological operations. That is why I have introduced legislation based upon committee recommendations.

This is bipartisan legislation aimed at strengthening Federal coordination, improving oversight, and helping close regulatory blind spots that have allowed unauthorized facilities to operate undetected. We hope this will ensure local communities have the access and the resources necessary when a biological threat emerges.

Too often, local officials are asking: Who do we call? Who has the authority? Who has the expertise? Our legislation helps answer those questions before another emergency unfolds.

Mr. Speaker, first responders should not have to walk into an unknown biological environment without clear Federal support. Parents should not have to worry about hazardous material being stored in facilities next door to schools and residential areas. Communities deserve transparency and safeguards, whether the incident occurs in California, Nevada, or anywhere else in the country.

It is important that we protect our constituents from a larger crisis. The legislation would strengthen oversight, coordination, and response mechanisms that can prevent confusion and reduce the risks.

I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to review these two pieces of legislation and to become cosponsors. Together, we can ensure that Federal agencies, State authorities, and local communities are better equipped to address these unauthorized biological operations that would prevent threats in their areas. The public demands that we provide preparedness, and preparedness demands action.

Let me also thank local officials that acted responsibly when it was first determined they had a problem. They include Code Officer Jesalyn Harper from the city of Reedley, City Manager Nicole Zieba; mayor of the city, Mayor Tuttle, of the city council; and Supervisor Nathan Magsig. All of these individuals worked together with our office to, in fact, act on the situation in Reedley, California.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that we act on this legislation so that people around the country can feel safe from any kind of illegal biological labs that may crop up in their communities. Together, we can close these gaps, support the communities, and keep our constituents safe.

HAPPY 90TH BIRTHDAY TO BETH RAGLAND

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

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Beth Ragland, who I call my honorary mother, a remarkable Nebraskan who is celebrating her 90th birthday this week.

Beth represents the spirit of our district. After the passing of her husband, Ken, she chose not to slow down but to keep moving forward with a purpose. She returned to the classroom, pursued her long-held interest in law, and earned a degree with a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

She went on to serve as an intern at the Sarpy County Courthouse, where her curiosity and work ethic stood out immediately. I know firsthand that the county attorney from Sarpy, Lee Polikov, values her hard work and support.

Beth is an inspiration to her fellow students. She reminded them, and all of us, that learning, service, and ambition never end at any stage of life.

Her unyielding spirit inspires us all to work hard for whatever we desire. Her generosity, resilience, Christian spirit, and joy for learning continue to uplift everyone around her.

On behalf of Nebraska's Second District, I wish Beth Ragland a very happy 90th birthday and thank her for being such a powerful example of perseverance and purpose and for being my friend.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Black History Month, I rise today to honor two community leaders and two outstanding youth for their contributions to the Second Congressional District of Nebraska.

Brenda Council has been described as a pure force, a trailblazer, a fighter, and a leader who has paved the way for so many in Omaha. As a prominent politician and community leader from North Omaha, she has established a historic career marked by several firsts for African-American women in Nebraska.

She was the first African-American woman to serve on the Omaha City

Council and president of the Omaha School Board and first to serve in the Nebraska Unicameral. She served on the Omaha Board of Education for 11 years and is president of the National Caucus of Black School Board Members and State senator for the 11th legislative district.

Council has held leadership roles in many organizations such as the Urban League of Nebraska, North Omaha Community Care Council, and United Way of the Midlands.

Ms. Council has been married to her husband for 40 years. Together, they have one son and five grandchildren.

Fred Conley is a pioneering figure in Nebraska politics, recognized as the first African American elected to the Omaha City Council. His career, spanning over 50 years, is defined by breaking racial barriers and advocating for the revitalization of North Omaha.

Raised in Omaha, Mr. Conley is a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. His political career was born from community activism, specifically the right for district-based voting. Prior to the city's removal from at-large elections, a system that historically marginalized Black candidates, Conley ran for the city council twice.

Following the transition to district elections in 1981, Mr. Conley was elected to represent North Omaha and dedicated his efforts toward infrastructure and economic development. His leadership was recognized by his peers who elected him city council president. In 1988, Mr. Conley served as Omaha's first African-American acting mayor.

Mr. Conley's legacy includes the enforcement of fair housing laws and the physical reclamation of community landmarks. He was instrumental in their naming of the Malcolm X Park and supporting the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial.

His continued civic work through service on the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District Board, and as a founding member of 100 Black Men of Omaha leave a great mark in our city.

Mr. Conley and his wife, Teresa, have three children and have resided in the same North Omaha district they have dedicated themselves to for over 40 years.

Earsul Banks IV exemplifies resilience, resilience in the face of adversity. Despite significant academic disruptions caused by a chronic battle with sickle cell disease, Banks utilized mentorship from 100 Black Men of Omaha to regain his academic standing. He is a dedicated member of the chorus, drill team, and marching band. Mr. Banks is an unstoppable force who transformed health challenges into an opportunity for personal and academic growth.

Mara Johnson Anthony is a high-achieving high school student who maintains a 4.0 GPA with AP courses. She balances academic rigor with leadership in volleyball, the art club, and the Girls Inc. Eureka! program.