

## DECODING EPSTEIN FILES

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

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Congressman MASSIE and I went to the Department of Justice to read the unredacted Epstein files. We spent about 2 hours there, and we learned that 70 to 80 percent of the files are still redacted.

In fact, there were six wealthy, powerful men that the DOJ hid for no apparent reason. When Congressman MASSIE and I pointed this out to the Department of Justice, they acknowledged their mistake. They have now revealed the identity of these six powerful men. These men are: Salvatore Nuara; Zurab Mikeladze; Leonic Leonov; Nicola Caputo; Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, CEO of Dubai Ports World; and Leslie Wexner, who was labeled as a co-conspirator by the FBI.

My question is: Why did it take myself and THOMAS MASSIE going to the Justice Department to get these six men's identities to become public? If we found six men that they were hiding in 2 hours, imagine how many men they are covering up for in those 3 million files. The story gets worse.

The reality is that Donald Trump's FBI scrubbed these files in March, long before THOMAS MASSIE and I passed the Epstein Files Transparency Act. My bill is clear. The Epstein Files Transparency Act requires them to unredact those FBI files. Yet, the Justice Department said to me and to Congressman MASSIE: We just uploaded what ever the FBI sent us.

Guess what. The FBI sent scrubbed files. That means the survivors' statements to the FBI, naming rich and powerful men who went to Epstein's island, who went to his ranch, who went to his home and raped and abused underage girls or saw underage girls being paraded, are all hidden. They are all redacted.

It is a little bit of a farce. They are inviting all the Members of Congress to go see the Department of Justice's "unredacted files," but they have got all redacted files from the FBI.

It is not the fault of the Justice Department attorneys. They were just told to upload things that Donald Trump's FBI had already scrubbed.

It is a blatant violation of the Epstein Files Transparency Act, but it also asks a fundamental question: Who are they protecting? Why are they protecting these rich and powerful men, people I call part of the Epstein class? Why are we in a country where there is no elite accountability for people who do the most heinous things?

We have in England the king now calling for an investigation and possible prosecution of his own brother. We have in Norway the princess who no longer has support to be the queen. Yet in the United States of America, we have someone in the Cabinet, Howard Lutnick, who is all over these Epstein files and who allegedly had business

with Epstein after he was convicted of pedophilia, but is still in the Cabinet.

We need to ask ourselves: Are we in America going to have the lead accountability? Are we going to call to account the rich and powerful people who broke the law or cavorted with a pedophile, a convicted pedophile?

Are we going to have prosecutions for billionaires who went to this island and either raped underage girls or saw underage girls being raped and didn't say anything? Are we going to have investigations?

I will tell you what this is about. It is not just about the 1,200 survivors. It is about two tiers of justice in America. It is about people who can accumulate wealth and power and don't have to care about the rest of America.

They have destroyed so much of this country. Income inequality is at a 60-year high. Workers' salaries are less than they have been for 75 years as a part of GDP. Somehow, this country seems to be working for the rich and powerful; but it is not working for ordinary working-class Americans.

I say enough. It is time to begin with accountability for the Epstein class. Hold in front of Congress those people who visited the island or did business with Epstein after he was a convicted pedophile. Let's investigate them, and let's prosecute them.

Let's return to democratic accountability in the United States of America. Let's return to one system of justice in the United States of America. Let's return to a place where every American has a stake in this country.

## PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY

(Ms. KAPTUR of Ohio was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Social Security. It is a sacred trust and a solemn promise to generations of America's workers. It is a promise that includes a retirement benefit that is earned. It is a disability benefit in the event of injury. It is also a survivorship benefit, an insurance benefit for families if the earner becomes ill or is fatally hurt and dies.

This belongs to all Americans who work. Workers pay into this earned benefit system, and they do it through their FICA taxes. It comes out of a check every month. Social Security is earned.

Yet, President Trump and his administration, especially the DOGE boys—I bet you nobody in this Chamber even knows their names—have worked to weaken this 90-year-old security benefit.

The Trump administration and their approach threatens the Social Security Administration's ability to operate. They have already cut over 7,000 jobs of employees who administer this program to millions of Americans from coast to coast.

In my district alone, there was an 11 percent decrease in Social Security field office workers. That means ap-

pointments are delayed, and questions can't be answered for months. Sometimes the phone isn't answered through no fault of their own.

I want to say to every single public employee who works in a Social Security office across this country that they are patriots. We thank them for the work they do. We salute them. We salute them for their patriotism.

Meanwhile, the Social Security Administration says they are not closing any offices; but the so-called Department of Government Efficiency, DOGE, is attempting to weaken and dismantle a system which has stood tall for almost a century, created by Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

More than 11,000 Americans turn 65 each day. Many will graduate to access benefits and, ultimately, Medicare for their own health. Congress must ensure that our citizens have a guaranteed safe and secure retirement. They worked for it.

DOGE not only threatens Social Security by removing vital staff across our country but by mistreating and exposing beneficiaries' private and personal information.

In my entire lifetime, I have never seen strangers go into the U.S. Treasury Department and peek at other people's private beneficiary records. This is un-American. We can't even name the names of those who did this.

The private information of the American people should not be fed into AI software somewhere or made open for the entire internet, which is full of hackers to access. We must protect the assets of our people and those who trust this program.

Social Security information has always been private until now. Social Security is often the only resource that keeps our seniors out of poverty. For more than 7 million Americans over the age of 65, at least 90 percent of their income comes from Social Security, which they earned.

Of those 7 million, almost half would not be able to afford essentials such as food, housing, and clothing without Social Security benefits. Now due to tariffs and inflation caused by Trump, those costs continue to go up, up, and up for everybody including seniors. It is hardest on them.

Every county in Ohio has at least 20 percent of its population receiving some form of Social Security benefits, and this means Social Security plays a huge role economically in northwestern Ohio's economy.

□ 1100

Standing up for our region and our seniors is one of my highest priorities in Congress, and that is why last year, when Social Security celebrated its 90th birthday, I introduced a resolution to demonstrate continued support from Congress for this program. It must be strengthened to support Americans and the next generation throughout their retirement for decades to come.

Raising the retirement age would reduce benefits for millions of Americans, placing an unnecessary burden on

seniors and those who are close to retirement.

I promise to oppose any changes to the retirement age for these vital, national retirement, disability, and insurance programs. If seniors choose to keep working after age 60 or age 65, that is okay, but they will be taxed on their income. That is only fair, but that FICA tax will go into Social Security.

I thank all of our colleagues who joined in supporting my resolution and urge others to consider supporting this resolution, which demonstrates the House of Representatives' dedication to protecting retirement security by not raising the retirement age. I support strengthening Social Security, not cutting and gutting it.

Mr. Speaker, I end with Social Security is a sacred trust from one generation to the next, and we intend to keep it.

God bless every senior in this country and those who will access that important age of 65–66 very soon.

#### RECOGNIZING JOSHUA HOBSON

(Mr. MACKENZIE of Pennsylvania was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MACKENZIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Officer Joshua Hobson of the Bethlehem Police Department for an act of service that reflects the very best of our law enforcement.

While working an overtime shift, Officer Hobson responded to a call that was first reported as a burglary. It turned out to be an 88-year-old resident who was deeply concerned about the lock on her front door, and she no longer felt safe in her own home.

After inspecting the door, Officer Hobson realized that the lock had been improperly installed. Instead of just filing a report and moving along, he took it upon himself to go to a local store, purchase a proper lock, and install it himself, giving this resident the peace of mind that she had been missing.

This story is just one example of the many behind-the-scenes ways that our local law enforcement serves their communities every single day. Officer Hobson's actions reflect the care, professionalism, and compassion that define the men and women who protect our communities.

I am grateful for Officer Hobson and for the men and women of the Bethlehem Police Department who work every day to keep our communities safe.

#### RECOGNIZING KATE GILCHRIST

Mr. MACKENZIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kate Gilchrist, a senior at Parkland High School and a resident of Orefield, for an extraordinary achievement.

Kate was recently selected as an Emerging Young Artist awardee, 1 of just 15 nationwide whose work will be displayed prominently here in Washington, D.C. This program highlights

talented artists with disabilities and supports their growth in the creative economy.

Kate's work reflects creativity, confidence, and resilience, and her selection is a testament to her talent and determination. It is inspiring to see a young person from our community be recognized on the national stage for telling her story through art.

As a fellow Parkland Trojan, I congratulate Kate, her family, and her teachers, and I wish her continued success as she pursues her passion and future opportunities.

#### RECOGNIZING MARIO LANDINO

Mr. MACKENZIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mario Landino, a graduate of Emmaus High School, for representing our community on one of football's biggest stages.

Mario recently played in the College Football National Championship as a member of the Indiana University Hoosiers, starting on the defensive line as his team captured the national title.

Back home in Emmaus, where I reside, friends, former teammates, coaches, and neighbors came together to cheer him on, a testament to the character and leadership that Mario has shown, both on and off the field.

Mario's success reflects the hard work, discipline, and values instilled by his family, coaches, and community. I congratulate him on this incredible achievement and wish him all of the best and continued success in the years that lie ahead.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF JIM VANWERT

Mr. MACKENZIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Jim VanWert, a dedicated member of the Lower Macungie Fire Department, who recently passed away after 45 years of service to our community.

Jim devoted his life to protecting others, serving in many roles over the decades, including nearly 25 years as assistant fire chief.

Jim's leadership, experience, and commitment helped to shape the department and mentor generations of firefighters. For nearly half a century, Jim answered the call whenever his neighbors needed help. His service reflects the dedication and sacrifice that define fire departments across our region.

I extend my deepest condolences to Jim's family, his fellow firefighters, and the entire Lower Macungie community. As a Lower Macungie resident, I thank Jim for his service and the sacrifice that he gave.

Jim will never be forgotten, and I am grateful for the example that he has set for all of those who serve.

#### RECOGNIZING KEVIN CAHILL

Mr. MACKENZIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kevin Cahill, head coach of the Lehigh University football team, for earning the Eddie Robinson Award, presented to the top head coach in the Football Championship Subdivision, or FCS.

This national honor reflects Coach Cahill's leadership in building Lehigh football and restoring a championship culture. Under his guidance, the Mountain Hawks captured back-to-back Patriot League titles, earned consecutive FCS playoff appearances, and completed an undefeated regular season.

Beyond the wins, Coach Cahill has built a program centered on discipline, teamwork, and student-athlete leadership, values that will reflect the very best of the Lehigh University community.

I congratulate Coach Cahill, his staff, and all of the student-athletes on this well-deserved recognition, and I thank them for representing Bethlehem and the Lehigh Valley with excellence, both on and off the field.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Holy Lord, make our love increase. Reach into our hearts and minds and inspire us to let go of our animosity and disdain for the people and situations that disturb us. Replace our distrustful attitudes with a growing reliance on You, and deepen our faith that we would believe Your hand is at work in our lives and in every soul and every circumstance. Then, as we find ourselves growing in care and concern, may we overflow in our desire to love and then find within ourselves the willingness to love others even as You have loved us.

Strengthen our hearts as well. For as motivated as we may be one day to do the right thing, to stay on the right path, to think and speak in the way You would have us do, it doesn't take but one irritating encounter, one misunderstood comment, one difficult morning to find ourselves out of sync with Your desire for the day and for our lives.

Infuse us this day with strength and purity that we may appear blameless in Your sight, confident in Your mercy, and upheld by Your steadfast love.

In Your strong and gracious name we pray.

Amen.