

### HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF MELISSA HORTMAN

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

Ms. MORRISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and service of Minnesota State House Speaker Emerita Melissa Hortman and her husband Mark, whom we lost to an unspeakable act of political violence last year.

The Minnesota House of Representatives will convene next week for the first time in more than 20 years without Melissa's presence. She was the single longest serving female speaker in Minnesota State history.

She always led with a calm and steady demeanor, emphasizing the importance of conversation and listening to one another. She rejected the idea that our political differences should prevent us from working together, and she always encouraged us to focus on our shared desire to make our State and our country a better place for the next generation.

Melissa was a giant among Minnesota lawmakers and modeled leadership qualities that we all should emulate.

She recognized that true leaders do not bully and coerce. They listen and sacrifice, and they compromise while remaining true to their convictions. They lead with humility above all else.

I think of her mentorship and her example every day and call on my colleagues to honor her legacy by prioritizing civility and humility in our service and always striving to make our communities just a little bit better for someone else.

### HONORING LAW ENFORCEMENT

(Mr. CRANE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate and honor Robert Skankey and Hunter Bennett who tragically lost their lives in a helicopter crash last Wednesday.

After responding to a domestic violence call in Flagstaff, law enforcement officers engaged in a nearly 2-hour gunfight with a dangerous criminal. During the pursuit, the Arizona Department of Public Safety provided air support with a Ranger 56 helicopter crew.

Shortly after the suspect was apprehended, the helicopter crashed, taking the lives of marine veteran Robert Skankey and trooper paramedic Hunter Bennett.

On behalf of all Arizonans, we mourn the loss of these two heroes who dedicated their lives to public service. Words cannot fully express our gratitude for their selflessness, courage, and commitment to keeping our communities safe.

May the Lord bless their families, friends, and colleagues during this dif-

ficult time and grant them everlasting peace.

### ST. LOUIS ALL-STAR FRANKIE MUSE FREEMAN

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

Mr. BELL. Mr. Speaker, each month I recognize a St. Louis all-star, someone who represents the very best of our city. During Black History Month, I have been highlighting Black leaders who helped shape St. Louis and expand opportunity for everyone.

However, this week is bigger than one name. That is because long before the great Bill Clay was elected to Congress, Black Missourians were fighting through poll taxes, literacy tests, and intimidation just to cast a ballot. They were told their voices didn't matter. They organized anyway.

Countless leaders pushed from the streets, as well as leaders like our beloved Frankie Muse Freeman, who fought in the courts.

When I see new efforts to make voting more restrictive, more complicated, and more conditional, I am reminded why their work matters. Black History Month isn't just about remembrance. It is about vigilance.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here because they fought to open the door, and I won't let anyone quietly close it.

### ICE AND DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

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

Mr. Speaker, Trump unleashed chaos and cruelty on our cities. His ICE and Border Patrol agents are out of control. Masked Federal agents are terrorizing our communities. They have killed two Americans exercising their First Amendment rights, and they have killed others.

They are targeting people based on their skin color. Instead of demanding accountability, the Republicans are rushing to give more money to ICE and the CBP. This is reckless, it is dangerous, and it must stop.

Not another taxpayer penny should go to CBP or ICE until guardrails are in place to protect civil liberties, prevent abuse, and hold officers accountable for breaking the law. Americans do not want these agents roaming their streets, and they are done paying for government-sanctioned terror masquerading as public safety. It is not immigration enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, this failure starts at the top. Kristi Noem must go. She must be removed. I am demanding accountability and moral leadership. Our democracy depends on it.

□ 1130

### RECOGNIZING RYAN COOGLER

(Ms. SIMON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SIMON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a son of Oakland, California, my constituent, Ryan Coogler, whose film "Sinners" has earned 16 Academy Award nominations, the most of any film in Oscar history.

Ryan Coogler was born in Oakland, California, raised in Richmond, and educated at Saint Mary's in Berkeley.

He first came to national attention by putting a human face on the murder of Oscar Grant. He is the youngest director to helm a billion-dollar film. Now, with "Sinners," he has given the world the work of prophetic cinema.

"Sinners" deploys the imagery of Southern Gothic horror to excavate the truths this Republic has long preferred to bury.

Vampirism became a metaphor in the film to uplift systems that fed on Black life, body, and spirit since the founding of this country.

It is the full humanity that he lifts up in this movie, the humanity of Black folks building community and clamoring and claiming joy under apartheid conditions.

Alongside Ryan Coogler, our district celebrates Oaklanders Delroy Lindo and Raphael Saadiq for their nominations. They are three Oakland artists, and one extraordinary film.

Mr. Speaker, we are so very proud of Ryan Coogler.

### SAFETY IN AMERICA

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I have said for months that no one is safe in Trump's America. From New Jersey to Minnesota, mothers, fathers, children—no one is safe. We have seen people like Greg Bovino and his masked paramilitaries come into our communities and cause an immense amount of harm. We have seen 5-year-olds come home from school only to be detained and then sent to Dilley, Texas, then be returned and see the administration try to end their asylum claim. This is what people are experiencing across the country. We need everyone to speak out against it, not just in Minnesota, not just in New Jersey, and not just Democrats but Republicans as well. This is not who we are as a country, and we cannot be silent in this moment.

### ISSUES OF THE DAY

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I will assure the Chair that I will not be speaking for 60 minutes. I will be kind of amazed if I get to 25.

We now go on a work period back in the district for a little over a week. I think there are certain topics that haven't been talked about enough in this Chamber, and hopefully they will be talked about a little bit more when we return.

The first anecdote, which is symptomatic—it is huge problems for America, I would argue the greatest immediate concern for America—is shown by an incident that happened in Minneapolis.

A little while ago, an ICE agent doing his job had his finger bitten off by one of these radical protesters who seem to have descended in Minneapolis. What happened afterwards, though, as horrific as that is, was even worse.

First of all, you would think if you bit off somebody's finger, you would be in a lot of trouble with the law. Minneapolis is in some place called Hennepin County, and you would have felt the Hennepin County law enforcement, the district attorney, would have dealt very seriously with the person who bit off the finger of an ICE agent.

In fact, Minneapolis—which is kind of like, I guess, New York West or Los Angeles East, they did not see anything worth prosecuting when you bite off the finger of an ICE agent.

Then we went to the Federal law enforcement, and they convened a grand jury to indict the person who bit off the finger of an ICE agent, which you think would be relatively automatic. Nobody argued that this person didn't bite off the finger of an ICE agent, which by the way will not be able to be sewn back on.

Instead, when they brought it before a grand jury, which was somewhere between 16 and 22 people, they would not indict. They were, in fact, hostile to the ICE agent and wondered what he was doing in Minnesota.

The person who bit off the finger of an ICE agent will not suffer any penalty at all that we can determine.

Now, this is not only an incredible injustice to the ICE agent who lost his finger, it is a danger sign for America. Every country has immigration laws. When I talk to people in my district, even people who think we ought to let more people in this country, they don't think we should have no immigration laws. Nevertheless, this is where we stand.

As I repeated before, right now we naturalize about 800,000 people every year in this country. 800,000 people are sworn in as new citizens if you take a 4-year rolling average.

That is higher than any time in our country. It is about six times what we were letting in when I was a child. We right now are in a position in which about one out of six people in America is foreign born, which is the highest it has been for at least the last 130 years.

We have nothing to apologize for. We are not being xenophobic. We are not saying we are going to let nobody in this country, but obviously we have to have some restrictions or we would

wind up with tens of millions more people in the country.

However, despite our generosity in letting more people here, we have significant areas of the country governed by elected people who will do all they can to wage war on the rest of us and not enforce our immigration laws.

This is the most egregious example of the problem. Can you imagine a grand jury whose attitude is we don't care if an ICE agent gets their finger bitten off? That is what we have in Minnesota.

Like I said, while it is outrageous in its own right for this individual, it is a danger sign for the future of America when you have significant areas of the United States which are actively working to have no immigration laws at all.

This happened in Minnesota. I think it could have happened in Washington State. It could have happened in California. It could have happened in New York. We have to find a way to get Americans back on the straight and narrow as far as respecting our law enforcement.

One of the reasons why they lost control in Minneapolis in the first place is that local law enforcement would not assist ICE.

I have talked to sheriffs in my own district, and whenever any Federal agency is engaged in an action in any county that they are aware of, the local law enforcement is prepared to assist them.

That is, if the FBI is around, if ICE is around, if the Secret Service is around, if Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives are around, the local sheriffs always say: What can we do to help you? Maybe it is to secure a perimeter, maybe it is to transport somebody who has broken the law, but maybe it is just to have a squad car visible to let local people know that some serious law enforcement work is going on.

Whatever it is, the sheriffs of the State of Wisconsin are always there. It is automatic that they assist their brothers in law enforcement. The sheriffs I talked to couldn't even think of an example in which local law enforcement complained privately about having to help the Feds, but in Minnesota—and it is not surprising it happened in Minnesota and not in Missouri and not Indiana—at the request of elected officials, a mayor and a Governor, local law enforcement had to stand down and watch as riots took place, property damage, and even more injury to the Federal employees.

This place has to find a way to persuade our citizens that we are a great country and our laws have to be enforced. As long as we keep heading down this path of not enforcing the laws or allowing States to be so degenerate that they do not want to help Federal law enforcement, it will ultimately be the end of the country.

I want to talk about another area of which I will say in this case what other countries are doing affects the United

States, and will also head us toward being the type of country we wouldn't want to live in.

That is with regard to a committee hearing we had this week on the First Amendment and how it affects internet platforms, but it is really a greater topic than just that.

This week, we had a hearing in the Judiciary Committee in which we talked about restrictions on free speech in Europe. Usually, when I think of Europe, I think of Europe as being kind of like the United States, right? You take an airline to London or Paris or Rome, and you expect the same freedoms and prosperity you do in the United States.

□ 1140

In this hearing, we heard of a woman who is a member of the Finnish Parliament. She was charged with a crime and has had to go through a great deal of legal work to not be penalized yet because she quoted the Bible in Finland.

The Finnish Government had apparently decided, particularly what I guess this body would call a controversial part of Romans, that because she quoted it, she should be penalized for that.

We also heard from an Irish comedian who told jokes about transgenderism in Great Britain, and he was arrested. He has since fled to the United States, to a country in which you can still tell jokes about transgenderism so far. You can still tell jokes about illegal immigration and not go to jail.

Now, we were supposed to care about this, and we do care about it because it affects our platforms. Insofar as the European governments put restrictions on X or put restrictions on Instagram, it affects Americans, as well, and that is true. What I thought was even more significant is, this is what is happening in Europe.

In Europe, they have lost the right to free speech, which is just shocking to me. Frequently, bad things that happen in this country happen in Europe first. You have to remember that under the last administration, under the Biden administration, they had proposed a Disinformation Governance Board.

Think about that. That is something out of Orwell. Joe Biden, who was the President of the United States, elected in a free election, proposed a Disinformation Governance Board, apparently to identify speech that he didn't like and have the Federal Government do something to restrict that speech.

I will guarantee you they would have been restricting free speech when it came to immigration policies. They would have been for restricting free speech if it intervened with the type of ideas they wanted to instill in kindergarten or first grade or second grade students with regard to human growth and development programs.

In any event, the totalitarians are at the gates. They are taking over Western Europe, and the United States is

next. They have taken over Western Europe, from what we heard about what is going on in Great Britain, Germany, and Finland.

If you look at the Disinformation Governance Board, right now, there were enough Republicans, enough free speech news outlets, probably even enough Democrats to prevent the Disinformation Governance Board from going forward. If you look at the elections since then, the type of radical Democrats who are replacing the handful of commonsense Democrats who are still left, I am afraid that in 3 or 4 years, our country will have a Disinformation Governance Board.

What is going on in this country that we are restricting free speech and hate law enforcement, at least immigration law enforcement, so much that you can bite off a finger of an ICE agent and nothing will happen to you? I believe what it is, is a psychological problem. It is something that a few conservatives in the areas of psychology and psychiatry have to identify. I will refer to it as "Thunberg syndrome." You may remember the little girl who, about 10 years ago, became famous in Sweden for pushing the global warming hoax.

This little girl was in a Western country, a well-off family, somebody who hypothetically should have been happy, right? According to her father, Greta Thunberg was unhappy, despite all her material wealth. I think that is true of a lot of people, sadly. They are spoiled people with time on their hands in the West.

She became happy by spending all her time pushing this global warming stuff. Do you know why it made her happy? Because she had a purpose in life, and everybody, to be happy, needs a purpose in life. This little girl, who presumably had enough money, didn't need a job—her parents took care of her—was, not surprisingly, unhappy, depressed, so that was her cause.

Eventually, she took up other causes. When the horrific Hamas invaded Israel and killed over 1,000 Israelis, she decided to take up that cause and decided to be hostile toward Israel and in favor of the terrorists. It is not surprising why. She hated the West. She hated herself.

In the Israel-Hamas war, if you want to call it that, Hamas and what you would call Palestine, they were, as many Third World countries are, corrupt, and being corrupt, they were poor.

The leadership would transfer the money they got from Europe to Qatar or to Paris. Therefore, seeing a corrupt, unhappy region in Gaza and a region, by the way, of bored people because they were living off of welfare largely, in a choice between that and a well-run, Western, honest country like Israel, Greta Thunberg got more joy out of engaging in protests or whatever these people do to try to help the Hamas group that brutally killed a thousand people.

Our country has to identify Thunberg syndrome and see what we can do to prevent it from taking over our country. Because just as Greta Thunberg suffers from this psychological problem, I believe the person who bit off the finger of the ICE agent and most of these protesters in Minneapolis also suffer from Thunberg syndrome, in which they hate America, in which they want us to adopt policies that will guarantee the destruction of America.

They are now clearly a majority in the wildly wealthy city of Minneapolis. These people are also a majority in many wildly wealthy cities in California and in New York City. Unless we find a way to deal with their psychological problems, it will be the end of the U.S.

Prior to coming down here today, I attended a little program put on by Stephen Miller, who is a brilliant economist, talking about how the economy is growing in the U.S., and we should all be so happy.

As a Republican, I should think, well, that is good news because it means it is more likely that I am going to be reelected next year in November, and my colleagues are going to be reelected in November. I wasn't quite as happy as I should be because I think who wins these elections is not just determined by whether the Republicans do a good job of having a strong economy.

In fact, we have done a very good job of improving the economy, but what scares me is not that. What scares me is the well-off, unhappy people who, despite the fact that they got a raise next year, despite the fact that their 401(k) went up, are going to be unhappy because they suffer from Thunberg syndrome. They are too spoiled, and as a result, they are going to vote for the party that is in favor of immigration.

It even has prominent members who want to get rid of ICE, which is just as absurd as saying prominent members who want to get rid of the police department.

I am afraid that that message of no enforcement of immigration laws and restricting the First Amendment so you can't be critical of immigration or can't be critical of weighing in on what we teach young children about sexual activity, that those people, for whatever reason, in favor of abortion till birth—which is so grotesque that the people I deal with back home don't even believe the Democrats are for that because it is so preposterous, but they are. I am afraid that people like that are going to carry the day in the November election.

□ 1150

Mr. Speaker, what we are dealing with are not traditional things. We are doing a great job in the economy. What I am afraid of is the increasing number of spoiled Americans who have become like Greta Thunberg—anti-Westerners, anti-American people—who want elected officials who share their view.

By the way, since we did touch upon the economy, I want to point out some-

thing recently that was pointed out to me by Steve Miller. In the most recent jobs report, there were some jobs we got more of and some jobs we got less of.

There was a significant increase in private-sector jobs. Private-sector jobs are very important because private-sector jobs lead to wealth. I, of course, right now have a government job. During this time period, the number of government jobs fell; with private-sector jobs up 172,000 and government jobs down 42,000.

Maybe many Americans don't realize that when we hire more IRS agents, that is supposed to be a good thing and the sign of a strong economy. That is the way they compute them. If we hire more bureaucrats to look at a computer screen and do nothing in the Department of Defense, that is also supposed to be a sign of a booming economy because we have more jobs.

In fact, the difference between the— one of many differences between the Trump administration and the Biden administration is the Biden administration, when they improved employment, they had the government hire more people. They said: Look, this is great. We have the government hire more people.

When the Republicans took over, we did not consider hiring or laying off more people staring at computer screens, doing very little, that were identified by DOGE. Those were the areas where employment went down. Areas where employment went up were areas like, in particular, manufacturing in which we were producing more things that people use and making people wealthier.

Remember in the future, America, that when you hear statistics about employment going up or down, you should ask what type of employment is going up or down. Is it like Donald Trump wants, and the vast majority of Americans want, in which the number of people involved in manufacturing or service industries that make us a wealthier country are going up?

Do we want to have the type of figures—which kind of, I think, misled the American people—in which we hire more people for the IRS, we hire more people for the Department of Commerce, or we hire more people for the Department of Agriculture? None of these are making us wealthier, but they do generate statistics in which we say: Aha, more people have jobs.

Mr. Speaker, one more time before I leave here, I beg my leadership to do something about what I still believe is the number one problem in this country. That is the fact that we have many programs, most of which originated in the 1960s, which are designed to incentivize families to form without a father in the family. There are people who always wanted this.

Karl Marx always wanted it. There are all sorts of people in academia who read Karl Marx and think he had something worthwhile to say.

It is something Kate Millett, the founder of women's studies classes, which are all over our universities—there are relatively few majors, but there are a lot of people who take one of those classes as an elective. These people are anti-man. They don't want men in the family.

It is not surprising with people following this group that there is—they would consider it successful to pass more and more programs that a family with a mother and father at home would not be eligible for. If they somehow get the man out of the home, they are eligible for it.

We are all familiar with these programs. One program is food stamps, what used to be called food stamps. We also have low-income housing where you may get an apartment that other people would have to pay \$1,200 for and you get nothing.

Earned income tax credit can easily be, if you don't work too hard, getting \$7,000 or \$8,000 and getting nothing if you are married to a person with an income.

There are Pell grants. As one young gal about 22 years old told me, she and her husband got married before they had a child; but she knew lots of friends who weren't getting married because they got free college.

Daycare is another program in which you can pay to have someone take care of your kids while at work if you don't get married to the other spouse.

We have talked a lot about the Medicaid program. Again, we use the program for healthcare and poor people to try to penalize those foolish people who get married first.

It is easy. It varies from couple to couple how much they lose if they get married. I think it is safe to say it is very easy to come up with hypotheticals of \$25,000 or more—a \$25,000 penalty in this country from getting married and frequently keeping the men out of the family.

Mr. Speaker, I have known about this for some time. In case anybody wants to look at this a little bit more, they can look at books written by George Gilder in the late 1970s, which at the time were bestsellers and everybody talked about during the beginning of the Reagan administration. Unfortunately, nobody ever did anything about it.

He looked at what at the time was referred to as "a ghetto" in Albany, New York. He followed around a young couple, and the gal had just gotten pregnant. At that time, given George Gilder's upbringing, he thought that would be cause for concern for the couple. They would have to get married right away. They would have to work harder to support the child.

It was to George Gilder's surprise and shock that, as he followed this young couple around, they were thrilled that the woman got pregnant out of wedlock because it allowed them to go from government office to government office to get free food, to get what at

the time was called the free AFDC check, to get free rent, and to get free medical care. They had it made in the shade.

Great, Mary is pregnant. We are not going to get married. We are just going to stop working now because of that.

Of course, what happened is over time Americans' behavior changed. We went from in the 1950s, before Lyndon Johnson was President, and in which about 4 percent of the children were born without a mother and father at home, to a steady increase for about 30 years to over 40 percent.

There are so many wonderful single parents out there. I know people who have done a great job of raising children as a single parent. Of course, we do have programs to help people who are widows or widowers in Social Security. That is not, I think, what is normally meant by a single parent.

Overall, when we go down this path, we have more and more people in a difficult situation who can be overwhelmed by this. It can hurt their children. I think studies will show various measures of success or failure, and it is much more difficult with a single-parent lifestyle. Something that is not publicized enough is it is horrible for the men.

George Gilder would tell us, if you look at a single-parent situation, the person who is penalized the most isn't the children or the single mom. The person who is penalized the most is the single man because his natural purpose in life is to support a family. The government has taken away his natural purpose in life. He, therefore, does not have a purpose in life.

In areas of high poverty, I think this is why we see so many single men having unhappy lives. If you pick up the paper and find out who is getting murdered, it is usually single men. If you look and see who is dying of drug overdoses, it is usually single men. Those who are not doing well education-wise are single men.

Of course, the reason the single men are doing so poorly is because of the great society programs which are designed to make those single men worthless. This is another reason why this body ought to take up these welfare programs.

Not only do we want what is best in the next generation for the children and not only do we want what is best in the next generation for the mothers, but we just treat the single fathers very poorly. We don't give them a purpose in life. As a result, so many are unhappy. So many wind up dying from murder, dying of drug overdoses, and just, in general, leading unhappy lives.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the things that I hope we begin to take up next week. I hope our leadership team realizes that, while we are doing a good job on the economy, and we are growing private-sector jobs, and we are not having an artificial economic boom by hiring a bunch of IRS agents and calling it a welfare country, I hope we take up some of these other issues.

I hope our conservative opinion makers take up these other issues and educate the public that for America to become a great country again, we have to do something with all these unhappy Americans suffering from Greta Thunberg syndrome because they don't have a purpose in life and so they adapt the purpose of anti-Western, anti-American behavior.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1200

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BEGICH) laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
February 12, 2026.

I hereby designate the period from Thursday, February 12, 2026, through Sunday, February 22, 2026, as a "district work period" under clause 13 of Rule I.

MIKE JOHNSON,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

#### DIRECTING THE CLERK TO MAKE CHANGES IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 5616, \$2.50 FOR AMERICA'S 250TH ACT

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk be directed to make changes in the engrossment of H.R. 5616 that I have placed at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the change.

The Clerk read as follows:

On page 3, line 17, strike "gold" and insert "gold;".

On page 3, line 21, strike "silver." and insert "silver; and".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the changes are agreed to.

There was no objection.

#### BLACK HISTORY: STOLEN LEGACIES

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, and still I rise, a proud, liberated, unbought, unbosser, and unafraid Democrat.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this is Black History Month, and I have been accorded the honor of presenting annually the original Black history resolution.

I am proud to do this in concert with a great organization. This organization has been bearing the torch, carrying the torch—the flame—of Black history now for so many years, founded by the Honorable Carter G. Woodson, who is widely known as the person who established this notion of a Black History Week, Black History Month. So I am