

Systemic racism has been codified into laws, Madam Speaker, and into our budgets. Black unemployment has skyrocketed. Black homeownership has significantly decreased.

We know the Department of Justice has rolled back civil rights protections and disparate impact antidiscrimination regulations, weakening the ability to change policies that harm our Black communities in housing and unemployment.

Trump has issued executive orders targeting museums and institutions like the National Museum of African American History and Culture trying to hide the truth about Black history.

We will never stop fighting to protect and center the voices of our Black neighbors. No matter how much the Trump administration attempts to whitewash it and how hard they try, they cannot erase Black history.

My Black neighbors ask me: Is it true that the President has not said anything about Black history?

Not once did he acknowledge Black History Month.

Again, we know our Black neighbors have shaped every chapter of our Nation's history. That will never change. This Black History Month, we renew our commitment to fighting for a more just, equitable future. Black history is American history.

#### THANKING LARISSA RICHARDSON

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, every time I tried to sit down and write this, I found myself tearing up. That is how much my chief of staff, Larissa Richardson, meant to me and continues to mean to me and so many of our team members.

Larissa has served our families for over a decade. From my time as a State Representative to our years in Congress, Larissa has been a tremendous and deeply committed partner in this work. She built an exceptional district team to make sure our neighborhood service centers were responsive and rooted in community.

She helped deliver close to \$70 million back home through the appropriations process, resources that made a real difference in people's lives.

She made sure every single meeting, policy decision, and late night was centered on the needs of the beautiful families that we represent.

She always had my back. She believed in the vision I had for our work, even when the culture here in Washington, D.C. didn't make it easy. We faced very difficult moments together, and we always said we are going to outwork the hate.

We stay grounded in our values, and Larissa Richardson was such a huge part of making that possible. She has now transitioned to continuing the fight for our families on our new mayor, Mayor Sheffield's team, and I couldn't be any prouder of her.

Madam Speaker, Larissa will always be part of Team Tlaib. That doesn't change. We already miss her presence, leadership, and calm strength. This

isn't goodbye. This is just a new chapter.

Madam Speaker, I wish everyone will take a moment and join me in thanking her for her years of service for our community.

I love you, Larissa.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO JACK LINK, FOUNDER OF LINK SNACKS, INC.

(Mr. TIFFANY of Wisconsin was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. TIFFANY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jack Link of Link Snacks, Incorporated, on his induction into the Wisconsin Manufacturing Hall of Fame.

Born and raised in Minong, Wisconsin, Mr. Link learned the fundamentals of meat processing at an early age in his family's butcher shop.

By the mid-1980s, after the family meatpacking business closed, Jack identified an opportunity to improve the quality and consistency of meat snacks available in the marketplace.

These efforts led to the creation of Jack Link's Beef Jerky. What started as a small Wisconsin operation has now grown into the world's largest manufacturer of jerky in the world. Through it all, the company has remained 100 percent family owned.

Jack Link's induction into the Wisconsin Manufacturing Hall of Fame is a well-earned recognition of a man who built a manufacturing powerhouse while staying true to Wisconsin ingenuity and values.

Jack has also been a strong supporter of education in the Northwoods, contributing to the Northwood Foundation and funding Jack Link's Aquatic and Activity Center. The center provides the Minong area with its first space for swimming, fitness, and youth programming.

Madam Speaker, I thank Jack Link for strengthening America and Wisconsin's manufacturing, and offer congratulations to Jack, Mary Jo, and the entire Link family on this honor.

#### STATE OF OUR UNION IS TRAUMATIZING OUR CHILDREN

(Ms. PRESSLEY of Massachusetts was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. PRESSLEY. Madam Speaker, the state of our Union is traumatizing our children. Today, I refuse to give an audience to a man who breaks promises and steals childhoods, but instead, I rise to address the children directly.

Madam Speaker, I rise today for 2-month-old Juan Nicolas. Juan Nicolas, you came into this world mere weeks ago and already America has broken her promise to you.

At barely 2 months old, you should know only the comfort of a soft blanket and your mother's voice. Your cries should be met with warm milk and lullabies, but your small body has been detained by the State. You and

your mother were imprisoned at Dilley Detention Center, a for-profit prison. Your mother told us you were in pain. I can only imagine the pain she felt, too. Your small body vomited up the formula you drank. The water there is dirty. The stress and trauma of being shackled and locked up in the precious days of postpartum made nursing impossible. You were finally seen by a doctor, returned to the baby prison that is Dilley, and then mere hours later, your entire family, your parents, and your 1-year-old sister, Mia, were forcefully deported and left along the side of the road in Mexico.

You, my sweet boy, are precious and deserving of love and safety. No child should endure what you are going through. Journalists, pediatricians, and people of good conscience have rallied around your family to keep you safe.

Madam Speaker, I rise today for 2-year-old Daphne from Massachusetts. Daphne, your dad, Fidel, loves you more than anything. Your father has no criminal record. He has done nothing wrong. I know it is hard for you to understand why your father suddenly disappeared. ICE says Fidel was picked up as a collateral during an ICE operation in Chelsea, Massachusetts. Fathers are not collateral. They are someone's whole world.

Daphne, your dad missed you every day that you were apart. You are together again, but you never should have been separated. We will do everything we can to keep him home with you where he belongs.

Madam Speaker, I rise today for 9-year-old Susej. The world has heard your pleas from behind the walls of the Dilley Detention Center. You have been imprisoned for over 60 days, and I want you to know that so many people are pressing for your freedom. You deserve a joyful life free from fear and a childhood filled with love, but this White House and everyone complicit in their wholesale child abuse and neglect has ignored your cries. Your story, brilliance, and voice belong everywhere, so let me read directly from a letter you wrote.

You pleaded: I miss my school and my friends. I feel bad since when I came here to this place because I have been here too long. I have been 2 years and 6 months in the United States, and I was happy with my friends in the school, but now I need to leave. Seeing how people like me, immigrants, are being treated changes my perspective about the U.S. My mom and I came to the U.S. looking for a good job and a safe place to live, and my mom was looking for a good job.

You believed in the promise of America. I will not stop fighting until you are free.

Madam Speaker, I rise today for siblings from Chelsea in my district. Liam, Ailany, and Ashley. Ailany, you were only 2 weeks old when your father was taken by ICE. In the precious days he spent with you, he cared for you

with so much love and devotion. I am heartbroken that as the days drag on you are missing out on his voice soothing you, his arms cradling you back to sleep. There is no doubt he loves you deeply. His absence has nothing to do with you.

Instead, it is the work of a cruel and callous government that is causing your family lasting harm and heart-break.

Liam, I know at 3 years old you feel the ache of absence and constantly ask for daddy. Your big sister, Ashley, has lost her advocate. Your dad worked hard to get her the support she needed to navigate school and her autism diagnosis daily.

Your mom is a determined woman and working hard to keep you all safe, but the weight of this is something no one should have to endure.

Madam Speaker, I say to Ailany, Liam, and Ashley that we will do everything we can to bring your daddy back home. He is a good man who has done nothing wrong, and the courts agreed. While he has been brought back to the United States, he remains in ICE custody, denied precious time with his family and his future hanging in the balance. We will not stop fighting until your family is reunited.

Madam Speaker, Juan Nicolas, Susej, Ailany, Liam, Ashley, and Daphne, today, I recognize you as my honorary guests to the state of the Union, not because the man who imprisoned you or denied you your parents' care deserves an audience, but because you belong everywhere. You deserve to live and thrive and to take up space.

The Halls of Congress don't belong to a dictator. They belong to you. Childhood should be a birthright, but today in America, it is a privilege afforded to the few and not the many. I will fight for you like you are my own because you deserve that.

#### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FFA WEEK

(Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an organization that has shaped much of my life and to recognize the young leaders who are the future of this great Nation.

This week marks National FFA Week, and as a product of FFA myself, I know firsthand the values, knowledge, and character it instilled in me.

This year, the over 1 million students enrolled in FFA are led by their National FFA Officer Team and the National FFA President, Mr. Trey Myers of Perkins, Oklahoma.

A native of Oklahoma's Third Congressional District and a student at Oklahoma State University, Mr. Myers is responsible for leading and shaping the future of FFA. Those who know Trey know his strong Oklahoma roots and his heart of service for those around him, as well as his dedication

to his family, his country, and his faith.

We are all looking forward to the great things that Trey and his officer teammates will accomplish this year in that famous blue and gold jacket.

Happy National FFA Week.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF OFELIA TORRES HIDALGO

(Mrs. RAMIREZ of Illinois was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and the legacy of Ofelia Torres Hidalgo, a fighter, a leader, a devoted daughter, and an inspiration to Illinois' Third Congressional District.

At the tender age of 16 years old, on February 13, 2026, Ofelia's life was cut short by a rare and aggressive form of cancer. Yet, the cancer was not Ofelia's only battle.

Last October, her father, Ruben Torres Maldonado, was detained by DHS agents at a local Home Depot.

Immediately, Ofelia fought to bring her father home. In no small part because of Ofelia's viral social media call to action, Ruben was finally released. In her final days, from her hospital bed on Zoom, Ofelia fought one more battle: to have her father's order of deportation canceled, ensuring he would no longer live in fear. She passed 3 days later.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, it is my honor to commend Ofelia Giselle Torres Hidalgo for teaching us the meaning of love, hope, courage, and resolve. We will carry her light with us as we fight for all our loved ones who deserve to be home, who deserve dignity, and who deserve to live without fear. May her memory be a blessing, and may she rest in peace and power.

We will continue the fight for all people.

Thank you, Ofelia.

#### HONORING REVEREND CIERA BATES-CHAMBERLAIN

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an unapologetic faith-rooted leader, Reverend Ciera Bates-Chamberlain.

Born and raised in Chicago's South Side, Reverend Bates-Chamberlain is the founder and executive director of Live Free, where she mobilizes Black churches to improve public safety and transform the justice system.

Since I first met Reverend Bates-Chamberlain through faith-based advocacy, I have seen her build coalitions and power to realize peace and justice in Chicago and beyond.

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Madam Speaker, she helped found the Faith Over Fear Coalition, a multifaith, grassroots table of leaders and organizations across Chicago committed to spiritually rooted organizing that centers dignity, healing, and justice. Through her organizing, people

are standing in solidarity, across faiths and communities, to resist the fear that divides us.

Madam Speaker, today, on behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, I am proud to commend Reverend Ciera Bates-Chamberlain for her commitment to put her faith into action and to build the power of Black churches and multifaith coalitions to realize a more just and loving world. We thank Reverend Bates-Chamberlain and congratulate her.

#### HONORING JUDGE CHANTELLE PORTER

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Judge Chantelle Porter, my constituent and a fighter for justice. Her career is a testament to her brilliance, her leadership, and her commitment to young people.

She has served as an assistant public defender in the juvenile division, as a Cook County assistant public guardian, and in private family law practice. At every step, she has pursued justice and centered the needs and dignity of children and families.

At 8 years old, she dreamed of becoming a history-making jurist. In December 2022, she did it when she was appointed to the bench of the 18th Judicial Circuit Court, becoming the first Black woman judge and the first Black circuit judge in DuPage County.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, I am proud to commend Judge Chantelle Porter for blazing trails, fulfilling her purpose, and making a difference in the lives of children and families across Illinois' Third Congressional District. We thank Judge Porter and congratulate her. It is an honor to represent her.

#### CRITICAL MINERALS ARE THE BACKBONE OF OUR COUNTRY

(Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight the importance of critical minerals. They are the backbone of our economy, but the U.S. has ceded supply chain dominance to China, our primary adversary.

In recent decades, China has overtaken the United States and our allies in production, processing, and smelting of critical minerals. Take rare earth elements, for example. Rare earths, a type of critical mineral, are crucial inputs into various consumer technologies, including smartphones, laptops, batteries, and cars.

China controls 70 percent of rare earth mining, 90 percent of rare earth separation and processing, and 93 percent of rare earth magnet production.

They exercise their monopoly in two ways: first, by dumping their product onto the global market to deliberately undercut U.S. producers; and second, by threatening to cut off our access to their exports, as they recently did in October of 2025.