

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.

□ 1030

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.

We have outsourced our supply chains to them, allowing them to engage in unfair trade practices that put our Nation's strategic and economic security at great risk.

The Trump administration has long recognized the threat China poses to our critical mineral supply chains and has taken bold actions that I applaud. Additionally, I have introduced several pieces of legislation that will help counter China's threat.

In January, I introduced the SECURE Minerals Act, which is aimed at supporting domestic critical mineral supply chains. The SECURE Minerals Act would establish a Strategic Resilience Reserve that would be tasked with stabilizing critical mineral prices and supporting domestic production and extraction supply chains.

The Strategic Resilience Reserve established under this bill would send a signal to the private sector that the United States Government is ready to take action, ultimately aggregating demand, stabilizing mineral prices, and reshoring critical advanced manufacturing.

We cannot counter China's choke hold on the global mineral marketplace alone. If we are to break their monopoly, we have to coordinate with our allies. I have also introduced the Finding ORE Act, which would enable the administration to work in coordination with our allies to map critical mineral research around the globe.

Madam Speaker, the time is now to act to save our future. Our economic and national security depend on it.

#### PROTECTING OUR MARINE WILDLIFE

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, recently the House Committee on Natural Resources voted favorably to report H.R. 4294, the Mitigation Action and Watermen Support Act, better known as the MAWS Act. It is an effort I co-lead with Congresswoman ELFRETH.

Having grown up on the Chesapeake Bay, I understand how important it is to protect our marine wildlife and restore the Bay's ecosystem. Since their introduction, the blue catfish have become an invasive species, posing a growing threat to the biodiversity of the region's waters and inflicting severe economic damage to seafood industries that rely on the Bay.

This legislation aims to direct the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration through its existing Chesapeake Bay office to coordinate with non-Federal partners to accelerate the removal of invasive blue catfish from the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

This effort will incentivize the harvest and sale of blue catfish, while providing valuable data for future efforts to combat invasive species in our waterways.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank Representative ELFRETH for her work on this effort, as well as her staff member, Allie.

I also thank the House Natural Resources Committee staff. They include

Richie, Kirby, Doug, Jackson, and Hannah on the majority and Rachel on the minority staff.

Finally, I thank the many stakeholders who have helped in understanding the issues and supporting this legislative effort including the National Fisheries Institute, the Pet Food Institute, and the American Sportfishing Association, among many others.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to seeing the full House consideration of this important bill very soon.

#### CELEBRATING SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH OF SANTA ANA

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

Mr. MIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 103rd anniversary of Second Baptist Church of Santa Ana, the largest predominantly Black church in Orange County.

Under the leadership of Senior Pastor Ivan S. Pitts, Second Baptist Church has become a cornerstone of our faith community. With congregations in both Irvine and Santa Ana, Second Baptist serves as a place of worship where people can find care, dignity, and belonging.

Through a variety of activities, including health fairs, vaccination clinics, youth programs, cultural events, and other civic engagement, the church has met people where they are and served as a vital cultural hub for our region.

In times of crisis, Second Baptist Church has led with action and led with works. From delivering groceries to seniors and single-mother households during the recent government shutdown to dispatching emergency response teams to support flood and fire victims, their commitment to service never wavers.

Madam Speaker, Second Baptist Church represents the very best of Orange County, and I am so proud to honor them today.

#### HONORING SALT LAKE TEMPLE

(Mr. KENNEDY of Utah was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Utah. Madam Speaker, today I rise to celebrate something truly remarkable happening in Utah. It is the reconstruction of the Salt Lake Temple.

For members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints like myself, this is a sacred house of worship. For all Utahns, it is a symbol of our heritage and the pioneer spirit that built our State.

Think for a moment what it took to build this temple in the first place. Impoverished settlers spent 40 years quarrying granite from the Wasatch Mountains and hauling the stone by wagon. They had almost nothing. But they had faith, and they built something meant to endure.

It has endured. Over 130 years later, the temple still stands strong. This temple has stood through wars, depressions, and tremendous change. It has watched Utah grow from a pioneer settlement into a thriving State.

The temple has been closed for renovation since 2019, and I know many have missed seeing this architectural masterpiece. Even this marvel of architecture requires each generation to do the work of preservation.

In that same pioneer spirit, engineers and skilled artisans are fortifying it with seismic upgrades, base isolation, structural reinforcement, and steel reinforcement to keep it standing for another 130 years.

I believe there is a lesson here for all of us. This year, America celebrates 250 years. Our Founders, like the Utah pioneers, built something extraordinary, not just for themselves but for us and for generations yet to come. They built this country with faith and sacrifice. They built it to last.

Madam Speaker, if we want America to last another 250 years, we need to do more than celebrate. We need to renovate. We need to strengthen our foundations. We need to strengthen our foundations of individual liberty and responsibility. We need to fortify what made America great in the first place.

Like those pioneers who built the temple, we must be wise stewards of what we have inherited. We must be willing to make the hard choices today. We must be willing to cut waste and restore accountability so American families can thrive. We must build not for ourselves but for those who come after us so they inherit a nation with a strong foundation and faith in the principles of freedom our Founders gave us.

Madam Speaker, with the Salt Lake Temple completion expected in 2026 and a public open house planned for 2027, just next year, I extend a personal invitation to my colleagues in this Chamber to come visit and see what faith and determination can build and preserve. The open house is free. It will be next year from April to October, and all people around the world are invited.

#### HONORING NANCY NORDHOFF

(Ms. JAYAPAL of Washington was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. JAYAPAL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Nancy Nordhoff. Nancy passed away peacefully on January 7 at the age of 93 at her home on Whidbey Island. She was surrounded by her family. She fiercely and steadfastly championed women's rights, literary arts, and environmental causes for over five decades.

It is so appropriate that I honor her today, a day when so many survivors of Jeffrey Epstein's horrific ring of predators and pedophiles are still awaiting justice. Those survivors are here to draw attention to this massive coverup and to call for justice.

Nancy would have loved that. She would have loved that so many of us