

Right now, more than 100,000 DHS employees are working without pay. TSA officers who screen passengers at our airports have now missed another paycheck. These are hardworking Americans who show up every day to do their job, protect travelers, and secure our homeland, even while Washington politics leave them without the pay they have earned.

This isn't some distant issue for Kansans. Families and travelers across the Big First depend on TSA officers every single day. From airports in Manhattan, Salina, Garden City, Dodge City, Liberal, and Hays, TSA agents are on the front lines making sure our skies are safe.

Just down the road in Wichita, the Air Capital of the World, thousands of Kansans build aircraft that carry passengers across the country and around the globe. Aviation is part of who we are in Kansas, and aviation safety is something we take very seriously.

Yet, Senate Democrats have allowed the men and women responsible for securing our airports to work without pay. As spring-break travel picks up, airports across the country are already seeing longer lines and staffing challenges because of this shutdown. These are dedicated public servants who continue showing up for work every day, even while Washington fails to send them a paycheck.

The impacts of this Democrat refusal to support DHS funding reaches far beyond airport security. FEMA training for first responders has been canceled. Cybersecurity personnel defending our networks are being furloughed while foreign adversaries continue probing our systems. Coast Guard training and maintenance have been disrupted. These are not theoretical consequences. They are happening right now.

Mr. Speaker, what makes the situation even more frustrating is that the House has already acted. House Republicans have twice passed full-year funding to keep the Department of Homeland Security fully operational. That legislation reflects a bipartisan framework negotiated by Members of both parties and deserves and ensures the Department has the resources it needs to protect the American people.

Mr. Speaker, Senate Democrats still continue to block that funding. Instead of allowing the department responsible for protecting our homeland to do its job, they are prolonging a shutdown that harms workers, weakens preparedness, and undermines public safety.

National security should never be used as a political bargaining chip. The men and women who protect our borders, screen our airports, respond to disasters, and defend our infrastructure deserve stability and support, not uncertainty and missed paychecks.

Mr. Speaker, the solution is simple. The Senate should take up the funding the House has already passed and reopen the Department of Homeland Security. The safety of the American peo-

ple, including Kansans across the Big First District, depends on it.

HONORING NEW CASTLE COUNCILMAN PENROSE HOLLINS

(Ms. MCBRIDE of Delaware was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. MCBRIDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize New Castle County Councilman Penrose Hollins, who was recently awarded the Order of the First State, Delaware's highest civilian honor.

Councilman Hollins is a veteran, lifelong leader, and one of Delaware's most committed public servants, serving on the New Castle Council for the last three-and-a-half decades. During that time, I am proud to have been one of his constituents.

For 36 years, he has worked tirelessly for his neighbors, advancing affordable homeownership, expanding access to libraries and community hubs, supporting programs for youth and seniors, all while promoting workforce diversity and economic development.

Delawareans, and specifically my neighbors and me in District Four, know him as a committed voice for justice, a trailblazer, and a pillar of the greater Wilmington area. Councilman Hollins made history when he served as the first Black president pro tempore of the New Castle County Council. In every chapter of his career, he has sought to expand opportunity for those too often pushed to the margins of society.

His legacy of leadership, courage, and fierce advocacy is an inspiration to all who know him, to his constituents, and to the entire State of Delaware.

Mr. Speaker, we congratulate him on a well-deserved honor, and we thank him for his dedication and service to the First State.

HONORING MICHAELA KURINSKY-MALOS

Ms. MCBRIDE. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I often come to this Chamber to share about the work we get to do, the perspectives our neighbors share with us, and to highlight the struggles and the successes that define this work. Today, I want to uplift one of the behind-the-scenes actors who has helped me deliver for our neighbors during my first term in Congress.

I rise to bid farewell to Michaela Kurinsky-Malos, who joined my team 2 years ago, long before I ever stepped into this Chamber. She has been a critical part of my team ever since.

For the last year, Michaela has served as my deputy chief and communications director, as well as chief vibes enforcer, bringing incomparable guidance, experienced leadership, and unyielding commitment to our team.

Michaela and I first met when she came on board as my campaign manager. While, technically, I was interviewing her for that job, it really felt like she was interviewing me. It was then that I saw her political acumen up close. Michaela is one of the most deci-

sive, incisive, and effective leaders I have ever known.

Through the highs and lows of the campaign trail and my first year in Congress, Michaela's tireless dedication to our mission, to her team, and to public service has always remained her North Star. Her work has shaped my life and our team immensely. She will be sorely missed by me and the entirety of our office.

Mr. Speaker, I am so grateful for her partnership and for all that she has done to make this possible. I wish her all the best in her next exciting chapter. The doors of Delaware will always be open to her, to Dexter, to Bubba, and even to Todd back to the greatest State in the Union.

HONORING ALBERT FIRTH

Ms. MCBRIDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Albert Firth of Millsboro, who passed away on February 19 of this year.

For two decades, Mr. Firth served our country in the United States Air Force, dedicating his career to protecting our Nation abroad. After retirement from the Air Force, Mr. Firth continued his commitment to public service right here in D.C., where he joined the U.S. Capitol Police.

Mr. Firth served with the U.S. Capitol Police from the late 1980s until nearly 2000, helping safeguard this institution and the people who work here. This was no small undertaking and far from the typical retirement scene.

During the 1990s, he was entrusted with an especially important responsibility, serving on the personal security detail for then-Speaker Newt Gingrich.

Throughout his career, his work required vigilance, professionalism, and a resolute dedication that Mr. Firth carried with honor, responsibility, and pride.

Mr. Firth's legacy is a reminder that service to our country takes many forms—sometimes in uniform abroad and sometimes here at home, protecting the institutions that sustain our democracy.

Delaware is grateful for his decades of service, and our Nation is stronger because of his selfless contributions to our country. May his memory be a blessing to all who knew him.

CELEBRATING CEREBRAL PALSY DAY

(Mr. LATIMER of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, let me recognize the talented medical research efforts ongoing to combat the scourge of cerebral palsy, an abnormal development or damage to parts of the brain during pregnancy or early in a baby's life, that controls movement, balance, and posture and has a devastating effect throughout that person's life.

There is no known cure for CP. Supportive treatments including physical

therapy, speech therapy, and some medications help, as well. CP is the most common movement disorder in children. Researchers are working every day to identify strategies to address the causes and effects of cerebral palsy.

One such pioneer is Dr. Kathleen Friel, a Westchester resident who herself has battled with CP since birth. She has overcome her own case to achieve master's and doctoral degrees in physiology and neuroscience. She has also written and lectured extensively about the disease and therapies to reduce its impact—all of this personal bravery and effort while this Federal Government blindly and foolishly cuts NIH funding for the very research victims so desperately need.

Mr. Speaker, from the floor of the House of Representatives, we salute Dr. Kathleen Friel for her personal battle with CP and her lifetime commitment to ease the suffering of her fellow individuals who also deal with cerebral palsy.

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CELEBRATING ST. THOMAS MAR THOMA CHURCH

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, the congregants of St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church will celebrate their 45th annual parish day, reflecting on their years of heritage and gratitude for parishioners not only from Yonkers, where the church is located, but from those who live across Westchester, the Bronx, and elsewhere in the metropolitan area.

The church dedication dates back to January 25, 1981, with the present house of worship on Morris Street, in Yonkers, established in June of 1990.

This parish has taken on a mission for youth ministry, the Junior Conference for Sunday School Children, and regional activity for youth camps from Connecticut to Pennsylvania.

The church provides its Christian charitable outreach with a community barbecue annually on Memorial Day and clothing drives and giveaways for needy in the neighborhood. Taking their cue from the great apostle St. Thomas, who went from Jesus' side to India to deliver a Christian message of faith, St. Thomas Mar Thoma has delivered a message of service and faith in this current day.

From the floor of the House of Representatives, we salute the clergy and the congregants of St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church on this, the 45th parish day.

BIRTHDAY WISHES TO VANESSA GIBSON

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I extend happy birthday wishes this week to Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson as she celebrates another year of service to her Bronx neighbors and friends.

I had the pleasure of serving with Vanessa as a colleague in the New York State Assembly alongside many former assembly colleagues, JOE MORELLE, ADRIANO ESPAILLAT, PAUL TONKO, CLAUDIA TENNEY, NICOLE

MALLIOTAKIS, GRACE MENG, and Leader HAKEEM JEFFRIES.

Vanessa Gibson's service in that chamber, exemplary as it was, was a prelude to her subsequent tenure in the New York City Council, where she was elected in 2013 and 2017, and now her historic election as the first female and the first African American to serve as Bronx borough president in 2021, re-elected in 2025.

As she celebrates her birthday this Thursday, March 19, we give her a happy birthday shout-out from the floor of the House of Representatives.

Happy birthday to Vanessa Gibson.

HONORING SHANE DIGIOVANNA

(Mr. LANDSMAN of Ohio was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. LANDSMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a friend and a constituent, Shane DiGiovanna.

Shane was born with EB, a rare and painful disease that makes the skin incredibly fragile. There is currently no cure. It is sometimes referred to as the worst disease you have never heard of.

Shane has bandages across most of his body. This disease, because of what happens to the skin, leads to infection, illness, and the kind of cancer he is fighting now.

Over the course of his life, Shane has had over 150 surgeries. Yet, he is one of the kindest, most spirited human beings I have ever met in my entire life. He is a remarkable person and, truly, one of the best people who I know.

Shane is brilliant. He is funny, curious, deeply empathetic, and full of joy. He graduated from college at Rice University, even though it is not something people expected of a child with EB. Yet, if you know Shane, it is not surprising. He was already reading, I think at college level, in the second grade.

Shane sends me pages of ideas and notes about history, politics, and why he believes the country can always be better. Shane has already lived longer than just about anyone with EB. He has used that time to make the world better for others, and his advocacy began when he was just a child.

After one of his first surgeries, Shane brought a stuffed animal named "Doggie" with him to the hospital. It made such a huge difference for him, so he created Doggie's Friends, Shane's charity at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, to provide a stuffed animal to kids who are undergoing surgery. He saw something that he knew would help, and he got it done. It is just who Shane is.

I met Shane as an advocate. I had just gotten elected to the United States Congress, and he had reached out to say that he wanted to talk about rare disease work, and he invited me over. I went to Shane's house and sat in his kitchen, and we went through all of the legislative priorities for the rare disease community.

I was all in immediately not just because the policy moved me, but Shane was so compelling, charismatic, and convincing. Since that day nearly 4 years ago, we have texted just about every day. We talk about politics, books, history, shows, life, and what else I should be doing to help families dealing with rare diseases.

Some of that work has already led to real progress. Congress reauthorized the Rare Pediatric Disease Priority Review Voucher Program. The program helps to speed up treatment development for nearly 15 million children who are living with rare diseases.

Congress also passed the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act. The law helps children to get specialized care across State lines without delays or higher costs. Of course, there is also the funding for research. Rare disease research is a good idea for some. It is life or death for these families.

That is why Congress has to step up to fund this research and make sure that the research we have funded reaches the people who will turn that research into treatment and care, to support its innovation, and to keep families healthy, which leads me to Shane's bill.

We introduced Shane's bill just last week, a bill that would require the Department of Health and Human Services to study the impact of fully covering bandages for people who are living with EB.

Believe it or not, these families have to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars for their bandages, even though the bandages help to ensure that these kids, young people, are less likely to go to the hospital, less likely to get an infection, and less likely to cost more.

The bill ensures access to these supplies to improve care, reduce hospital visits, and ease the enormous financial burden that families already face. This is Shane's bill, a bill inspired by his life and the families he has spent years fighting for.

Mr. Speaker, when you meet someone like Shane—someone who is curious, compassionate, and brilliant—you want to do more and be better.

I saw Shane's impact most clearly at his celebration of life, a room filled with people from across the country who have been touched by his kindness.

He is a funny, social, and gifted person, and his legacy is the life he lived, the people who he touched, and the work we will keep fighting to do, including this bill.

HONORING AIRMEN LOST IN KC-135 CRASH

(Ms. SEWELL of Alabama was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor six heroic Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice and gave their lives in defense of the United States.

On March 12, 2026, six American airmen were tragically killed when a KC-