

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MEJIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise because our Nation is at a crossroads. We face a familiar foe: the avarice of the powerful who rig our electoral systems in order to cement their power. This story is as old as our Nation. The powerful weaken the power of the many so that they cannot be held to account.

After all, if entire communities are silenced, then the greed that results in cancer alleys, in mass unemployment, high infant mortality, or explosive unaffordability has neither check nor balance.

While these actions begin along racial lines, the harm rarely limits itself to the same. While stripping Black Americans of hard-fought political power is weaponized racism that would make Strom Thurmond proud, the result is that every American is, in fact, losing their representative government.

This is an act of war against democracy, and we should see it as such.

HONORING OFFICER GABRIEL FACIO

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

Mr. BIGGS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of the memory and selfless service of Officer Gabriel Facio of the Apache Junction Police Department. His end of watch was June 8, 2025.

On the morning of June 2, 2025, Officer Facio and his fellow officers bravely responded to a road rage incident where a suspect had brandished a weapon, threatening motorists and nearby residents. Officers attempted to subdue the suspect with nonlethal tools, but the suspect opened fire, striking Officer Facio in the face.

He was rushed to the hospital in critical condition. Gabriel fought valiantly for 6 days, but on June 8, 2025, at just 46 years old, he succumbed to his injuries, surrounded by his family and his brothers and sisters in uniform.

His legacy lives on through his wife and two children, who were his greatest joy. His name is now engraved on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial right here in Washington, D.C., and his service was honored at the annual candlelight vigil.

His life stands as a reminder of the courage and commitment that define our law enforcement officers.

Officer Facio is the first Apache Junction police officer ever killed in the line of duty. His sacrifice will always be remembered.

We pray for his family and for the Apache Junction Police Department.

We thank Gabriel for his service to the people of Apache Junction and Arizona's Fifth District.

May God welcome him home.

CELEBRATING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AKRON ROUNDTABLE

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

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Akron Roundtable and name them Champions of the Week for Ohio's 13th Congressional District.

The Akron Roundtable has been a cornerstone of our community since their founding in 1976. Over the last 50 years, the Akron Roundtable has brought together roughly 480 speakers, including government officials, famed reporters, athletes, artists, business leaders, astronauts, and many other community leaders.

I had the privilege of speaking at the Akron Roundtable in 2023, so you know it is an esteemed place to speak. I saw firsthand the dedication of the group in order to bring the world to Akron.

The group started as a partnership with the Kiwanis Club, the Akron Beacon Journal, the Akron Regional Development Board, and the Akron City Club.

Through their collaboration, they created a nationally esteemed institution, and today the Roundtable is filled with passionate volunteers with a drive for connecting with leaders from around the world.

I thank the hardworking members at the Akron Roundtable for their service to the community. Their commitment to bringing the world to Akron is just one of the reasons why Ohio's 13th Congressional District is known as the Birthplace of Champions.

I congratulate them on 50 years of leadership and thank them for opening the world to the heartland.

KEEPING AM RADIO

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call for a vote at some time in this Chamber shortly on H.R. 979, a bill put together by GUS BILIRAKIS of Florida.

Recently, I had a friend who purchased a high—I could even argue overpriced European automobile. After driving around in the car for a few days, all of a sudden, she realized that automobile didn't have AM radio.

I can't imagine what I would have felt like if I spent 50 grand for a car and had no AM radio. Couldn't I take it back and say: Take out the windshield and put in the AM radio.

I mean, there are certain things you expect out of a car. I know the automobile industry is highly regulated to a certain extent because we don't want anybody shocked at the things they don't have in a car when they buy it.

This bill is mandatory. I bet I have AM radio on 80 percent of the time I am in the car. Whether you want news,

traffic, weather, sports, AM is the radio where you find it.

I will tell you: To prevent anybody from having a heart attack when they buy a car, let's pass H.R. 979.

IN SUPPORT OF VETERANS

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

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of our veterans and the proud men and women who have worn the uniform in service to this great Nation.

In New Mexico, service is part of our culture and who we are. Our veterans are our teachers, our firefighters, our small business owners, and our caregivers.

From Kirtland Air Force Base to Cannon Air Force Base, from rural and Tribal communities to the heart of Albuquerque, our veterans have answered the call. That service must be met with a commitment from Congress to fully support their care and benefits, and that means unequivocally rejecting efforts to privatize the VA. And we must stop this administration's quiet gutting of VA programs, including nearly 26,000 jobs at the VA cut across the country this year.

That is why, as we debate the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill this week, I have introduced an amendment to stop the privatization of the VA because we must stop these attacks on our veterans' affairs and fund the programs that our veterans have earned.

Mr. Speaker, our veterans have kept faith with this Nation, and we must keep faith with them.

RECOGNIZING BOB LESSARD

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

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great admiration and pride to recognize former Minnesota State Senator Bob Lessard, better known across northern Minnesota as "The Old Trapper" as he celebrates his 95th birthday.

Born in International Falls, Bob has long been a champion for the people and traditions of Minnesota. Over the course of his 26 years in the State senate, he never lost touch with the Northland. His work has left a lasting imprint on our State constitution, our natural resources, and the livelihoods of countless Minnesotans.

Bob fought to protect the rights of our hunters and anglers, implementing a constitutional amendment guaranteeing them the right to hunt, fish, and trap.

He was also the driving force behind the Upper Mississippi Headwaters Board, ensuring local control over the upper 400 miles of the river.

Throughout his career, Bob championed legislation that strengthened mining, paper companies, and logging. He fought for the workers who make these industries possible and for the communities that rely on them.

It would be hard to find another Minnesota State legislator who has done more for the Northland than “The Old Trapper” himself.

As he reaches this milestone, we honor not only his longevity but his extraordinary service, his unwavering dedication, and the legacy he leaves for generations of Minnesotans.

□ 1740

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

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

Mr. HARRIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, every day across this country, law enforcement officers respond to calls that most of us hope we never have to face: violence, danger, tragedy, and moments where lives are on the line. While others run away from danger, they run toward it.

To the brave men and women in law enforcement who answer that call: We thank you.

Every single day they put on that badge, unaware of the dangers that may lie ahead. Yet, they still stand ready to serve, time and time again.

While most Americans are asleep, they stand watch. When chaos erupts, they are the first to respond. When fear takes over a community, law enforcement officers are the line between danger and safety.

During this National Police Week, let us honor the courage, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment of the men and women in blue who keep our communities safe.

To every officer across North Carolina’s Eighth District and across the Nation, I stand to say: Thank you. Thank you for your courage and your service. Thank you for every holiday missed, every late-night shift worked, and every time you stepped into harm’s way to protect someone else.

My hope and prayer this Police Week is that everyone who sees a police officer will shake their hand and thank them for their service. The men and women behind the badge deserve to know that this country stands with them, supports them, and is grateful for their service.

FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TOPS SUPERMARKET SHOOTING IN BUFFALO, NEW YORK

(Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. KENNEDY of New York was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that

all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to submit extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KNOTT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart as we commemorate the fourth anniversary of the Tops Supermarket shooting in my community of Buffalo, New York.

On May 14, 2022, 4 years ago today, a racist white supremacist terrorist traveled more than 2½ hours to the only grocery store in a predominantly Black neighborhood on the east side of Buffalo to carry out a targeted act of pure hatred.

Motivated by racism and hate in his heart, the gunman entered Tops Friendly Markets with enhanced body armor and an AR-style rifle. He shot 13 people, 10 of them fatally.

On this solemn anniversary, we remember the precious souls we lost 4 years ago today:

Andre Mackniel, beloved father and brother;

Celestine Chaney, a cancer survivor and grandmother to six beautiful children;

Geraldine Talley, a proud mother, a sister to eight siblings, and an aunt;

Heyward Patterson, a deacon at the State Tabernacle Church of God in Christ in Buffalo;

Kat Massey, a civil rights activist, volunteer, and fierce advocate for gun violence prevention;

Margus Morrison, a father and an aide to the Buffalo Public Schools;

Pearl Young, a teacher in the Buffalo School District and pillar in her church community;

Roberta Drury, an active community member, sister, and caregiver;

Ruth Whitfield, a devoted caretaker, wife, mother, and grandmother; and

Lieutenant Aaron Salter, Jr., a public servant, retired Buffalo police officer, and a hero who sacrificed his life that day to serve those around him.

In just 123 seconds, those 10 innocent lives were stolen from us, marking one of the darkest days in Buffalo’s history and in America’s history.

The perpetrator, radicalized by white supremacist content online, fired a barrage of 50 shots, hellbent on one goal: killing as many Black community members as possible, all while live streaming it to the world.

It was a sick and twisted act of hatred and racist violence in America.

Today is a difficult day for our community, for the people of western New York, and for our country, as we mourn those we lost due to this senseless act of racist gun violence.

Yet, the carnage on that day could have been far worse if it weren’t for the heroic actions of Lieutenant Aaron Salter, Jr., a 30-year veteran of the Buffalo Police Department.

That afternoon, Lieutenant Salter was working as a security guard at Tops Friendly Market. When he heard the gunshots, Lieutenant Salter acted without hesitation and leapt into action to protect our community, firing at the shooter and hitting his target, but because this hate-filled terrorist was armed with enhanced body armor and tactical gear, Lieutenant Salter’s shots did not penetrate, and he, too, was murdered.

Lieutenant Salter died a hero, buying other patrons precious seconds to hide or escape as a result of his unwavering courage and his willingness to protect those in harm’s way.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask those listening here throughout the Capitol Complex and at home to join me to pause for a moment of silence to honor the 10 individuals who should be with us here today.

Mr. Speaker, because of this hateful act, Buffalo joined an ever-growing list of communities that have been scarred by mass shootings. From Newtown to Monterey Park, to Parkland, to Uvalde, and so many places in between, countless communities across our country, and to Buffalo, we are united today in mourning and in commemoration as we work to ensure that we one day will live in a world where these hateful acts will not happen.

When Columbine happened 27 years ago, there was a national promise that we would do everything possible to prevent another tragedy like it, but, yet, entire generations of children have now grown up with the normalization of mass shootings.

That reality cannot become normal. We must not allow this to become a permanent reality.

On the fourth anniversary of this tragedy in Buffalo, we must use this opportunity to advocate for the advancement of commonsense gun violence prevention legislation in the name of every single person we have lost because of a lack of it.

We must condemn acts of hateful, racist violence in all forms, and we must come together as Americans to ensure that our supermarkets, our places of worship, our schools, and everywhere else in our community are free from the scourge of gun violence.

This body has a moral obligation to take action. Our charge, on both sides of the aisle, must be to enact the commonsense reforms that the vast majority of Americans overwhelmingly support in order to keep our community safe and prosperous.

□ 1750

We must enact a permanent assault weapons ban and make sure that military-grade body armor is only in the hands of our Armed Forces and law enforcement. We must crack down on ghost guns, straw purchasing, and deadly accessories that turn handguns into semiautomatic weapons. We must close the Charleston loophole. We must expand red flag laws.