

gentleman from Kentucky, Staff Sergeant Benjamin Pennington. He gave his life in service to our country.

Ben courageously answered the call to protect us from those who sought to do us harm, and his sacrifice is a grave and sobering reminder of the dangers that our men and women in uniform face across the globe each and every day.

Just like our police officers and our first responders, they walk out the door to deploy, sometimes a very long deployment, sometimes 9 months, 11 months, and they don't know if that is the last time they will see their spouse or their daughter or their son. We must remember this sacrifice.

Servicemembers like Benjamin remind us that Memorial Day is not only a day to mourn our fallen but a deeply personal day for our military families and for our loved ones who bear the everlasting burden. It is not about barbecues. It is about remembering those who gave their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in thanking and honoring those who have served our great Nation.

SALUTING THE MEN OF THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 128

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

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the men of The American Legion Post 128 in Rye, New York, for their patriotism and their true sense of civic duty.

This post, comprised of veterans of military service, is just one part of The American Legion Department of New York, and it is led by Commander Fred de Barros and Adjutant Tim Moynihan. Their commitment to American values will be on display this Memorial Day weekend as they host the annual parade and ceremony on the Village Green in Rye.

The ceremony will feature a presentation of the annual Americanism award this year to a deserving Rye resident, Laura Pellegrini, along with high school students who have participated in the annual essay contest.

The post members last weekend placed American flags at the graves of veterans at Greenwood Union Cemetery. Every year, they conduct Veterans Day services on the Village Green in November, and also a used flag disposal ceremony and other patriotic recognitions.

From the floor of the House of Representatives, we acknowledge and recognize The American Legion Post 128 and the Ladies Auxiliary for their service to city and to country.

REMEMBERING CONGRESSMAN ELIOT ENGEL

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and accomplishments of my predecessor, Congressman Eliot Engel, who passed away on April 10, with particular focus on his representation of the Bronx and Westchester, and his leadership on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

A product of the Bronx, Eliot was a fixture in New York politics for as long as I knew him and zealously represented the diverse constituencies that characterized metro New York, and at various times the Bronx, Westchester, and Rockland Counties.

Originally winning election as a third-party candidate, he first served in the New York State Assembly from 1977 to 1988, and thereafter as a Member of Congress for the Bronx and Westchester until 2020.

Eliot supported liberal policies at home. He fought vigorously to protect Kosovar Albanians and for the United States to recognize Kosovo as an independent nation.

Last week in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, at the urging of my colleague RITCHIE TORRES, leader BRIAN MAST, and Ranking Member GREG MEEKS, we passed a bill to honor Congressman Engel's life and legacy by renaming the U.S. Chancery in Pristina, Kosovo, the Eliot L. Engel Building.

While naming a building for someone will never replace having them in the room with you, it is my hope that this effort will allow his work, his leadership, and his legacy to live on for years to come.

May his memory be a blessing.

CONGRATULATING WILLCOX HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL TEAM

(Mr. CISCOMANI of Arizona was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Willcox High School softball team on winning the 2026 2A State championship title.

The number five Willcox Cowgirls defeated the number two Mohave Accelerated in Bullhead City with a score of 5-3 to claim the championship and finish the season with an impressive 16-3 record.

This victory marks the Cowgirls' first State softball title in 16 years, an accomplishment certainly to be celebrated. This championship didn't come easy, though. On their way to the game, the team's bus broke down, but the Cowgirls didn't let this setback get in the way of the most important day of the season.

Instead, they crammed into parents' cars to make it to the game, and they made it on time, prepared to play their absolute best.

During the game, Willcox put one on the board in the fourth inning and maintained their lead, scoring 1 in the fifth, and then 3 in the seventh.

Freshman pitcher Hattie Macumber earned the MVP of the 2A tournament after an impressive seven strikeouts and two runs.

Congratulations to Coach Trevor Ward, the whole team, and everyone who made this win possible. Their hard work has made their school and their community very proud.

To the Cowgirls, may they enjoy their victory. They have earned it.

Here is to another successful season and many more to come.

REMEMBERING CHRIS AND JACQUE SHEAFE

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and honor a dear friend, Chris Sheafe. He and his beloved wife, Jacque, tragically and unexpectedly passed earlier this month.

My wife, Laura, and I are deeply saddened by this loss, a loss to us personally and a loss to our entire community.

Chris was a special person, a wise and thoughtful man, who generously shared his time with people and the causes that he believed in, as well. Chris devoted decades of his life to making the American Dream a reality as a successful homebuilder.

The safety, shelter, and financial security that comes from owning your home, Chris helped make that possible for so many people throughout his life. He was also a driving force in shaping Tucson's hospitality industry as a partner in the company that constructed one of the signature resorts that our desert community is famous for: Loews Ventana Canyon Resort.

His work with organizations like Rio Nuevo, the Southern Arizona Homebuilders Association, and the Tucson International Airport Authority was a true expression of how intentionally he cared about the Tucson community which he called home for the past 50 years.

Chris devoted his career to work and shaping southern Arizona, improving our community for those who live there today and for our next generation as well. He was a man of integrity, a man true to his word, and a man who you wanted close to you all the time.

Chris and Jacque's love for the Lord was truly evident. They both always took time to greet each one of my kids and make them feel special. I have six kids, Mr. Speaker, so that took time every single Sunday when we saw them at church.

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They brought joy into every room they entered, and together they led a life marked by service and by passion.

Laura and I are keeping the Sheafe family in our thoughts and prayers as we all grieve this heartbreaking loss.

We are grateful for all he gave to our community. He will be deeply missed, and his legacy will live on in the lives that he touched.

Mr. Speaker, may my dear friend rest in peace.

HONORING NAOMI LAKE

(Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank my former legislative director, Naomi Lake.

Naomi is a Chicago native who worked in my congressional office since my first day in Congress in 2019.

Naomi also worked on my first congressional campaign. She dedicated almost 10 years to help me serve my constituents.

When I was elected to Congress, she packed her bags and moved to Washington, D.C., excited to help me shape my work and represent our beloved Chicago.

Over the years, she rose from legislative correspondent to legislative assistant to legislative director. She leaves my office as an LD who is appreciated by her team, admired by her peers, and respected by members, staff, and advocates alike.

There is no task she doesn't do well, and Congresswoman SUMMER LEE is very lucky to have Naomi as her new legislative director.

Naomi is a brilliant young woman, passionate about social and economic justice, and deeply interested in the impact that U.S. policies have on our relationship with other countries, particularly throughout the Americas.

Her strategic policy mind has helped make my role as a Member of Congress and whip of the Progressive Caucus more impactful, as she always puts her interests of working people first.

She is an exceptional thinker, a gifted writer, and a thorough editor who helped my team be more effective in expressing my policy positions and serving the residents of Illinois' Fourth District. She is a dedicated and intelligent advocate who cares deeply about our community, my team, and the progressive movement.

Naomi has many talents beyond her role on the Hill. She is an experienced ballet dancer. She wakes up at the crack of dawn to row in the Potomac and is captain of her team. She has recently completed a half-marathon, while still managing a heavy legislative portfolio and leading our policy team.

In addition, Naomi is the type of person that I always want on my team—generous, thoughtful, funny, and humble.

Every congressional office would be lucky to have someone as talented and kind as Naomi. Whether discussing IMF surcharges, sanctions, or appropriations, I have always admired her sharp intellect and her quick and calm strategic sense in high-stake situations.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply grateful for Naomi's work for the constituents of the Fourth Congressional District, for her exceptional leadership in my office, and for consistently advocating for the needs of my constituents, working families across the country, and for humanity itself. I will miss her.

HONORING THE AZTEC EAGLES

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as we approach Memorial Day, I rise to honor the Aztec Eagles, known in Spanish as "Escuadron 201," a legendary fighter squadron of the Mexican Air Force, whose members volunteered to fight alongside the United States during World War II.

These brave fighters—36 pilots and 264 ground personnel, including electricians, mechanics, and radiomen—answered the call to defend freedom and served in the Pacific theater. Seven of those pilots made the ultimate sacrifice.

The Aztec Eagles were part of the Mexican Expeditionary Air Force, which assisted the Allied war effort, and were attached to the 58th Fighter Group of the U.S. Air Force. They flew more than 90 combat missions and played a critical role in the liberation of Luzon in the Philippines in 1945.

For their heroism, they were awarded the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation, the Philippine Legion of Honor, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal.

Today, I remember the Aztec Eagles with gratitude and pride. Their courage, determination, and sacrifice and commitment to freedom will never be forgotten.

HONORING THE TENNESSEE NATIONAL GUARD

(Mr. VAN EPPS of Tennessee was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. VAN EPPS. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to honor the Tennessee National Guard, not just for their strength and readiness, but for their extraordinary volunteer spirit. I know the sacrifices they make to keep our country safe, and our Nation is grateful.

I recently had the honor of attending President Trump's roundtable on the Memphis Safe Task Force. I am beyond impressed with the work of this task force and am grateful for the Tennessee National Guard's role in making Memphis safe again.

In 2024, Memphis had the highest rate of violent crime per capita, including elevated rates for murder, robbery, aggravated assault, and property crime.

As of March 20, 2026, the Memphis Safe Task Force has made 7,342 arrests, including 44 for homicide, 812 for controlled substances, 6,402 for firearm violations, and 94 for sex offenses. The task force has also returned 142 missing children and recovered 1,023 illegal firearms.

Because of President Trump's involvement, the crime rate in Memphis dropped drastically in 2025 compared to 2024, with a 26 percent decrease in murders, a 22 percent decrease in aggravated assaults, a 31 percent decrease in robberies, and a 48 percent decrease in carjackings.

Federal, State, and local partners have demonstrated what is possible through strong coordination, with Memphis serving as a model of successful partnership. The results would not have been possible without the guardsmen who have stepped up to help patrol our communities and keep Americans safe. I thank them for creating a place for families to thrive, businesses to succeed, and workers to make a good living.

I also recognize the Tennessee National Guard for its actions during Winter Storm Fern. As an active member of the National Guard, I am proud of how these men and women stepped up when Tennesseans needed them most.

Across 15 States, more than 5,300 National Guard members assisted in the aftermath of these storms. In Tennessee alone, 170 soldiers and airmen assisted stranded motorists, transported first responders, delivered critical supplies, and cleared debris.

Their assistance was invaluable. Tennessee National Guard members logged more than 10,000 man hours across multiple mission types, demonstrating both scale and commitment.

They conducted 44 cut-and-toss missions, clearing nearly 960 miles of critical routes and infrastructure to keep roads accessible and communities connected. They completed 757 civilian assistance missions, 601 medical and personal transport missions, and 497 health and welfare checks, ensuring that vulnerable residents were safe and that first responders could continue their lifesaving work.

This response reflects the National Guard's unwavering commitment to serving communities, even at great risk to themselves.

The Tennessee National Guard's volunteer spirit reflects the very best of Tennessee: courage, resilience, and selflessness. They remind us that service means a willingness to answer the call at any time, and that is exactly what these brave men and women do every single day.

Lastly, I recognize the National Guard Association of Tennessee for its continued commitment to supporting National Guard members. For over 100 years, they have supported military preparedness and the well-being of National Guardsmen. I thank them for serving those who serve.

HONORING THE TEACHERS OF CHICAGO HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS

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

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the educators of Chicago High School for the Arts, known across our city as ChiArts, located in Illinois' Third.

As Chicago's first and only public arts high school, ChiArts develops the next generation of diverse artists, while preparing our students with the comprehensive education for the next steps in their life.

The teachers of ChiArts believe that the arts belong to everyone, regardless of background, ZIP Code, or status. Thanks to their leadership and thanks to their organizing, ChiArts remains open today.

Like many public schools around the country, ChiArts faced the threat of closure last year, but it was the teachers who organized the Save ChiArts