

time for a new path forward. The Trump administration has damaged our Nation's standing in the world. They have totally screwed up the Middle East by ignoring human rights and embracing war. I urge my colleagues to stand with me in demanding that they not repeat the same cruel mistakes in Cuba.

REMEMBERING WES ANDERSON

(Mr. BAUMGARTNER of Washington was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to note the passing of a great American, a great patriot, and a friend, Mr. Wes Anderson of Spokane, Washington.

Wes was known across the communities of Spokane County for his exemplary service to fellow veterans who knew him best as "Doc."

Wes was a lifelong Spokaneite whose life was defined by service, first in Vietnam where he served as a hospital corpsman and later across our communities where he had time for every veteran.

The moments in Vietnam crystallized a lifetime of determination to serve veterans when, on his return to the United States, he had to fight his way through a crowd of war protesters on his flight home. His service to veterans took the form of over five decades of service through leadership roles in the Veterans of Foreign Wars, where he was honored for his work as a chaplain, and through various initiatives, small and large, that included his support for the residents of Spokane's veterans homes, 20 consecutive years of cleaning the Spokane Vietnam Veterans Memorial on each Memorial Day, and his volunteer work for veterans organizations such as Heroes Homestead.

With Wes' passing, there is a void in our community that will be felt for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, Wes was a patriot, a great American, and a friend. I speak for the entire Spokane community when I say that he will be sincerely missed.

RECOGNIZING THE EWU EAGLES FOOTBALL TEAM

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Eastern Washington University Eagles football team as they prepare for what promises to be a fantastic 2026 season.

Everyone in eastern Washington knows that EWU plays some of the most exciting brands of football in the Western United States, and I know personally that their tailgating in Cheney is second to none.

They are led by Coach Best, a former All-Big Sky center and Eastern Washington alum who has had an exemplary career as coach of the Eagles.

The Eastern Washington Eagles have a stacked schedule this fall with away games at Northern Arizona, South Dakota, University of Washington, UC Davis, University of Idaho, and Utah Tech, while welcoming schools like

Northern Iowa, Cal Poly, Northern Colorado, Montana, Montana State, and Portland State to Cheney.

I look forward to a great season of Eastern football, and I know the Eastern Eagles will be very competitive. I am sure the coach, his staff, every student-athlete, and the student body of Eastern all look forward to this exciting season.

Go Eagles.

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RECOGNIZING TIM MERCK

Mr. BAUMGARTNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Spokane native Tim Merck, an outstanding businessman, philanthropist, and family man. He and his wife, Beth, have raised an outstanding family.

Tim built a multimillion dollar business in Spokane from the ground up, Old World Christmas, which was known across the country and across the world as providing the best Christmas ornaments anyone can find.

Today, I also want to recognize a bit of trivia about Tim. When he sent his son and daughter to Notre Dame, he realized that there was not a leprechaun sculpture on Notre Dame's campus, and Tim set out to rectify that. Tim and Beth Merck, along with their children, Jon and Katherine, have long demonstrated a commitment to preserving stories and dreams in their operation.

Jon and Katherine fulfilled a dream for their grandmother by attending and graduating from Notre Dame. When they noticed that the leprechaun was not there, they reached out to the president, and today, there is this leprechaun statue at gate 10 of the Purcell Pavilion, the very gate through which the Leprechaun Legion enters the arena to cheer on their basketball and volleyball teams.

This is a tremendous story. Tim is also a very proud graduate of the University of Idaho, and upon presenting the leprechaun, he said: I guess it takes a Vandal to make sure that the students of Notre Dame have a leprechaun to celebrate.

Mr. Speaker, Tim is a great American and a great friend. I love him and Beth. Go Vandals. Go Irish.

STANDING UP FOR CUBA

(Ms. DEXTER of Oregon was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. DEXTER. Mr. Speaker, the American people need to know that their government is intentionally suffocating the nation of Cuba. There is no other way to describe what is happening.

Earlier this month, I traveled to Cuba with a congressional delegation to see firsthand how U.S. policy is affecting this country that is just 90 miles off our shore.

This is a country that is known for its joy and for its culture. It is a country that has had a glimpse of prosperity and promise during the Obama

administration when relations were normalized and decades of sanctions lifted, only to have Trump reinstate the blockade in 2017.

Normalized relations led to an explosion of opportunity for small businesses, international investment, and cultural exchange. Hope was contagious.

Today, much of that hope has disappeared.

Ultimately, it comes down to fuel. Immediately after coming back into office in January of 2025, Trump decisively cut off the ability for any fuel to get into their country—fuel the country depends on to run its electrical power plants, vehicles, and generators.

Cuba is not a nation that can produce its own, so without imported fuel, there is no electricity. This has reverberations across every aspect of Cuban life.

Families cannot go to the grocery store as they always have done and keep their groceries in a fridge or a freezer because they do not have reliable electricity. Meat, milk, and medicine spoil with the power outages that plague the nation. Basic services have broken down. Daily life is a constant struggle.

Cuba's public health system and its medical training programs are the envy of much of the world. Their healthcare system is filled with highly qualified, well-trained physicians, and yet the hospital I toured in Havana was nearly empty.

Physicians have no patients because they have no transportation, no buses to get there. They have tens of thousands of people waiting for surgeries because supplies are insufficient and only a fraction of their operating rooms are running.

I saw three CT scanners, their only scanners in this hospital, all broken down, an MRI machine also not working, and a handful of working ultrasounds, because parts cannot be imported.

I sat face-to-face with these doctors and understood the deep pain that they are feeling, having the skills and the will to care for people but being denied the opportunity for political reasons.

The difference is here in the U.S. we have never had the political will to ensure that every American has access to healthcare.

As a physician, I do not know what it is like to care for every patient that comes in my door without worrying whether they can afford it. In Cuba, they have spent decades fulfilling their promise to make healthcare a human right. Every person has access to healthcare for free. Can you imagine?

They made it a reality. We should be aspiring to that commitment to human health, not punishing an entire population for it.

Congress must not continue standing by while our own government intentionally inflicts hardship on an entire nation.

The Cuban people deserve dignity, safety, and self-determination. It is

past time for the United States to choose engagement over isolation and humanity over cruelty.

I am calling on every Member of this Congress to cosponsor Representative MCGOVERN's legislation to end the U.S. trade embargo on Cuba and move this nation toward normalized relations.

As Trump continues to act erratically abroad, Congress must send a clear and unified message: There will be no military action against Cuba.

It is time to stand up for the people of Cuba. This is about basic human decency. Congress cannot look to this administration to find that.

From Havana to Portland, we will stand up, and that means ending this cruel blockade now. I will use every tool at my disposal to make this happen, and I am asking every one of my colleagues to join me.

ONE YEAR OF WORKING FAMILIES TAX CUTS

(Mr. MANN of Kansas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, just over a year ago, President Trump signed the Working Families Tax Cuts into law on July 4, 2025.

One year later, the results are clear. American families are keeping more of the money they earn. Businesses are investing. Farmers and ranchers have stronger risk management tools, and our Nation is once again putting American workers first.

Our legislation prevented the largest tax increase in American history and made President Trump's 2017 tax cuts permanent.

During the most recent filing season, 97 percent of taxpayers received a tax cut, and \$82 billion was returned directly to the American people. Nearly 70 percent of those receiving relief earned less than \$100,000.

This law was written for working families, small businesses, seniors, farmers, ranchers, and Americans who get up every morning and work hard to build a better life.

More than 7.5 million workers claimed the no tax on tips deduction. More than 29 million claimed no tax on overtime. Nearly 40 million families claimed the enhanced child tax credit, and more than 35 million seniors benefited from the enhanced deduction for seniors.

These are real savings for Americans buying groceries, paying rent, putting gas in the car, and raising a family.

The Working Families Tax Cuts also delivered for Kansas agriculture. I called this legislation farm bill 1.0 because it strengthened the farm safety net and gave family farms more options to invest in their operations and keep their agricultural assets in the family.

It expanded access to affordable crop insurance, improved risk management tools for livestock producers and specialty crop growers, strengthened disaster and conservation programs, and

provided immediate tax relief for farmers, ranchers, and small rural businesses.

It also significantly increased the death tax exemption, protecting nearly 2 million family farms and helping ensure that land, livestock, and operations can be passed from one generation to the next.

In the Big First district, agriculture is our way of life. Producers face unpredictable weather, volatile markets, and rising input costs. They deserve certainty from Washington, not higher taxes and more red tape.

This law also made historic investments in rural America by creating the Rural Health Transformation Program and providing \$50 billion over 5 years to improve rural healthcare access in places like the Big First district of Kansas.

The bill also supported President Trump's work to secure our border and restore integrity to Federal programs. American taxpayers should not be forced to fund benefits for people who enter our country illegally. The Working Families Tax Cuts helps ensure that Medicaid and SNAP resources serve eligible, working Americans while supporting the men and women serving our communities and enforcing our laws.

Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago, President Trump and congressional Republicans made a commitment to working families. We promised lower taxes, a stronger economy, support for rural America, and policies that put American citizens first.

Mr. Speaker, 1 year later, Americans are seeing the benefits. The Working Families Tax Cuts are helping families keep more of their money, protecting family farms, strengthening rural communities, and creating greater opportunity across our country. Promises made. Promises kept.

HONORING MS. YOLANDA JACKSON

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

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dear friend and extraordinary woman of faith, and a living testament to courage and resilience: Ms. Yolanda Jackson.

This week, the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham will present Yolanda with its Iron Strong Award for her courageous battle with breast cancer. I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this recognition.

I have known Yolanda for more than 20 years. We became fast friends as neighbors in 2005, after we moved into the same apartment complex in Birmingham, Alabama. But our connection actually began years earlier. While working as a human resource consultant for the city of Selma in the early nineties, Yolanda became known to my mother, Nancy Gardner Sewell—Selma's first Black city council-

woman—and she adored Yolanda. It was a wonderful reminder of how small and how special our Alabama family can be.

Over the past two decades, we have celebrated life's blessings together, and we stood beside one another through some of life's toughest moments. Yolanda has been there for me, just as I try to be there for her, and I am extraordinarily grateful for her friendship. My life is richer because she is in it.

Not long after moving to Birmingham in 2005, Yolanda was diagnosed with breast cancer. She would go on to face two more cancer diagnoses in 2022 and again in 2024—three cancer diagnoses, three difficult battles, and three remarkable victories.

Throughout every step of that journey, Yolanda received exceptional care from the physicians, nurses, and staff at the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB. Her final treatment was in October of 2025. Her treatment was a success. Today, I am grateful to say that she remains in remission.

When you ask Yolanda where she finds her strength, her answer is simple: her faith. She believes that even at our hardest moments, God is at work, and that through suffering, he walks beside us, gives us strength to endure, and uses our trials to shape our character, deepen our faith, and make us into the people he wants us to be.

Yolanda has lived that belief every day of her life. She encourages everyone facing cancer to hold on to hope, to stay positive, and never stop fighting. She believes we all need someone to love, something to look forward to, and something to live for.

For Yolanda, that purpose shines brightest through her beautiful family. In 2019, she welcomed and adopted two precious twin boys, Ayden and Jayden, into her life. Last year, she opened her heart again by adopting their younger brother, Kyrie. Those three boys are truly blessed to have such a loving, faithful, and determined mom.

Today, we celebrate Yolanda. We also celebrate the extraordinary work of the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB. Their groundbreaking research, innovative treatments, and compassionate care have transformed countless lives, and Yolanda's story is a powerful testament to their mission.

Today, we celebrate an iron strong survivor, my dear friend Yolanda Jackson. More than that, we celebrate an iron strong woman, a faithful servant, a devoted mother, loyal friend, and an inspiration to everyone blessed enough to know her.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Yolanda on this well-deserved honor. Her courage, her faith, and her unwavering hope inspires everyone who has been privileged to know her.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Ms. Yolanda Jackson and wishing her beautiful family many years of continued health,