

west Texans. On Saturday morning, west Texas lost two of our finest and bravest first responders.

Lieutenant David Hill of Lubbock Fire Rescue and 27-year-old Lubbock Police Officer Nicholas Reyna were responding to a rollover accident when they lost their lives in the line of duty. A 30-year-old firefighter and paramedic, Matt Dawson, was also injured and remains in critical condition.

This is a tragic reminder that our heroic first responders wake up every single day and risk their lives to keep us safe. These men understood the sacred call to service. They gave the ultimate sacrifice and demonstrated the greatest love for their fellow man.

The Holy Scripture says this: "There is no greater love than this, than to lay down your life for your friends." May God welcome these earthly heroes into His heavenly kingdom. May He comfort the Reyna and Hill families. May He grant Matt a speedy and full recovery. May He continue to bless and keep those who keep watch over us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members that the rules do not allow references to persons in the gallery.

#### COMMEMORATING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his life of service to our Nation.

Next week, on January 20, we will observe Martin Luther King's birthday. We know that Dr. King was the most influential civil rights leader in our Nation's history among so many great civil rights leaders, such as our own Congressman JOHN LEWIS.

Dr. King's commitment to public service brought historic change to our Nation, affected our entire country and society, and reshaped the way we interact. So it is fitting that we observe the 25th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day as "A Day On, Not a Day Off."

It serves to remind us to ask ourselves: What are we doing for others? Dr. King called this "life's most persistent and urgent question." What are we doing for others in our country?

As a public servant for the past 40 years, I firmly believe that every individual has an ability and an opportunity to make a change. Communities across the United States will host events to commemorate Dr. King's achievements and give back to the community, including in my own district in the San Joaquin Valley.

I will proudly participate in the Martin Luther King Day Community March in Fresno and Merced, as well. My office will join the city of Fresno at an awards ceremony to recognize individuals and organizations for their outstanding service to give back to our communities in the spirit of Dr. King.

I urge all Americans to find ways to help others in communities on Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. You can find those options at NationalService.gov, a way for us all to give back. Because in the words of Dr. King: "The time is always right to do what is right."

#### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today also to recognize National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month to raise awareness about this atrocity that plagues our Nation and the world.

There are estimated to be more than 40 million victims of trafficking across the planet. It happens in all of our communities here, and because of the geographic location that I represent in California's San Joaquin Valley, my district sees a disproportionately high amount of human trafficking.

The fighting of this atrocity requires all of us to be involved, and we must do more. Every year, I work hard to secure additional funding for the Crime Victims Fund and to strengthen our efforts to stop human trafficking.

We were successful in getting an additional \$2 billion to support investigations and operations to prevent human trafficking and another \$2.6 billion to improve services for these victims in the spending bill that passed just last month. This helps organizations like Breaking the Chains in Fresno, which is crucial to survivors.

We must understand that these trafficking victims are just that; they are victims of crime. We also need to bolster our efforts to prevent this from continuing to occur, from supporting law enforcement efforts to holding perpetrators accountable to educating our children about the dangers, especially in this day and age, when the internet, sadly, is oftentimes a tool for traffickers.

It is estimated that less than 1 percent of the survivors of human trafficking cases are identified. That is an astounding number, I think: less than 1 percent of the survivors of human trafficking are actually identified.

Last year, as co-chairs of the bipartisan Crime Survivors and Justice Caucus, which I helped found with Congressman Ted Poe, Congressman PETE OLSON and I introduced a resolution in the House to prevent, eradicate, and raise the awareness of human trafficking as today's modern slavery. It calls for the Federal Government to coordinate efforts to fight human trafficking between agencies and with State and local governments and other organizations that are out there trying their best.

Just yesterday, I met with John Cotton Richmond, the State Department's Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, both here and abroad, to discuss how we can work together to fight this injustice.

I promise you, we must fight this injustice. As a member and a co-chair of the Victims' Rights Caucus, for sur-

vivors of these kinds of crimes, we will continue to put this among our highest priorities. The Crime Survivors and Justice Caucus will continue to lead this bipartisan fight to end modern slavery and human trafficking in all its forms.

#### IN REMEMBRANCE OF COLONEL LEE FRANKLIN WITTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, Thursday and Friday of next week, I plan to visit my alma mater, the United States Military Academy at West Point. I hope to spend time with the Department of Social Sciences and thank them for their service to our country and for their current job of training our next generation of warriors.

I am sure that many of the faculty also mentor individual cadets. During my era, we called it sponsoring. This is a critical part of the job that I want to continue to encourage them to do.

You see, I am headed back to West Point to attend the burial of my sponsor, Colonel Witter. I met the Witter family during my first free Sunday morning of Beast Barracks. We met at the Lutheran service in the Old Cadet Chapel in the cemetery.

Colonel Witter and his wife, Mary Ellen, and children, Nanette, Dorinda, and Mathew, welcomed me into their home. They provided a safe haven away from the constant scrutiny of the upper class. They provided a full meal now and then when full meals during my era as a plebe were not always assured.

Having been raised in a large family, they provided a second family, a younger brother that I never had and two younger sisters that I already had plenty of.

As in any family, sometimes I was helpful and sometimes maybe a burden. The Witter family was always there for me, in good times and bad. Whether I was breaking the porch swing or kitchen chairs, seriously burning Mathew, or spending the night when I was told not to, I was also forgiven.

Colonel Witter took a special focus on my school performance. I was on the other dean's list, the list academic deans pay closer attention to. Graduation for me was not a slam dunk. Colonel Witter would summon me to his office to encourage me and help motivate me academically. When I told him I thought I was doing okay, he responded: "I get your grades."

I could not have graduated from West Point without the love and support from the Witter family. For this, I will be eternally grateful.

Colonel Witter, 84, passed away Monday, January 6, 2020, in South Carolina. This is a picture of him at the military academy as an instructor. I was blessed to have a chance to be able to visit with him and Mary Ellen a year ago last March.