

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING JEFFERSON COUNTY COMMISSIONER TRACY KRAFT-THARP

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tracy Kraft-Tharp of Jefferson County, Colorado for her service as a Jefferson County Commissioner.

Commissioner Kraft-Tharp's commitment to working across the aisle to find bipartisan solutions for the benefit of Colorado is truly remarkable. She dedicated her career to serving others, first as a public school teacher and then as a social worker at the Tennyson Center for Children. After seven years as a Colorado State Representative, she was elected to serve as a County Commissioner. Tracy used her experience as a small business owner to champion policies that help businesses and nonprofits in her community, including mentoring executive directors and expanding access to mental health services. Her dedication to improving the lives of every Coloradan is commendable, and her presence will be greatly missed.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's Seventh Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Commissioner Tracy Kraft-Tharp for her time with the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners and sincerely thank her for her contributions to the Colorado community. I wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING SHANTA KATIPAMULA FOR FOUR AND A HALF YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE

HON. SUZAN K. DELBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Shanta Katipamula for nearly five years of outstanding service to my office and the constituents of Washington's 1st Congressional District. Shanta joined my office in July 2020, and as someone raised in Washington, she ensured that the voices of those in our communities were front and center in our work. She has worked tirelessly on securing millions of dollars for our region through Community Project Funding (CPF) and has become known as the "CPF Queen." Shanta has been instrumental in many of my legislative efforts including securing bipartisan passage of the National Landslide Preparedness Act, which will help communities better prepare for natural disasters, saving the Redmond postal facility and protecting mail delivery for millions of King and Snohomish County residents, and advocating for en-

hanced standards and protections for wildlife as demonstrated in calling for the relocation of Tokitae, the beloved captive Southern Resident orca who was captured from the Puget Sound.

As our Legislative Correspondent and intern coordinator, Shanta ensured that every constituent received a timely response and served as a mentor to countless interns in our office. Shanta has been a trusted advisor and an invaluable member of our team. Her sharp intellect and commitment to public service have elevated our work and remind us all why we fight for our communities. She has made a lasting impact, and her legacy will continue to inspire our work for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Shanta Katipamula and wishing her the best in her next chapter.

HONORING THE SPIRIT OF KING AWARDEES AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VIENNA'S DR. MLK JR. PROGRAM

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the distinguished Spirit of King award-ees for this year's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Program, held at First Baptist Church of Vienna.

Dr. King's legacy continues to inspire global movements for justice and equality. His vision for a more just and inclusive society lives on through ongoing efforts to address racism, inequality, and human rights across the world. He is celebrated annually on Martin Luther King Jr. Day in the United States, a reminder of his lasting influence on the fight for civil rights and social change.

The Spirit of King Awards are presented to individuals in Northern Virginia communities who embody the principles and spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. These awards honor those who work toward improving their communities, fostering equality, social justice, and unity—values that Dr. King championed.

The award-ees for this year are Nikki Brown, Deacon Dave Larrabee, and Rev. Becca Messman. Nikki Brown, founder of The Culture Cup, is a dedicated community advocate who spent a decade as a Fairfax County community outreach worker in Northern Virginia. During her time there, she uncovered the hidden African American history of Northern Virginia and realized its underappreciated significance. This discovery inspired Nikki to create a space where this heritage could be honored and celebrated. The Culture Cup is the realization of her vision, blending coffee and culture to preserve and showcase African American history in Northern Virginia. Nikki's determination and leadership have turned her dream into a vibrant reality, creating a hub where patrons can enjoy exceptional coffee

while immersing themselves in the rich tapestry of African American culture. Her legacy is a testament to the power of one individual's commitment to community enrichment and cultural preservation.

Deacon Dave Larrabee has served with the Lamb Center since February 19, 1999, in various capacities. The Lamb Center is a daytime drop-in shelter for individuals who are experiencing homelessness in Fairfax, Virginia. Dave was hired as Pastoral Assistant to launch the Saturday ministry in 2003. In 2004, he became Director of the daily operations of this ministry. Before the Lamb Center, he worked for the U.S. Department of Commerce from 1985 to 2000 and served 20 years in the U.S. Army and the Army Reserves. In May 2016, Dave graduated from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg in the MAMS Diaconal Ministry program. He has been called by the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America to serve as a Deacon at the Lamb Center.

Rev. Becca Messman is the Senior Pastor at Burke Presbyterian Church. Becca helped launch a worshipping community of recent immigrants called Lunch for the Soul that has been used as a model for community engagement around the denomination. A prolific writer, she has served as Vice President of the Presbyterian Outlook magazine and co-authored "Cultivated Ministry," a book about church vitality. She also was Co-Chair of VOICE, Virginians Organized for Community Engagement. Rev. Messman remains committed to social justice through her community engagement and roles at Burke Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Nikki Brown, Deacon Dave Larrabee, and Rev. Becca Messman for their tremendous efforts as leaders in our communities while embodying the Spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF DR. KEN COWAN

HON. MIKE FLOOD

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the life of Dr. Ken Cowan, M.D., Ph.D., whose remarkable service left a lasting impact on our communities.

A native of New York, Dr. Cowan was a Nebraskan by choice, who warmly welcomed and quickly embraced life as a proud Cornhusker.

At the Fred and Pamela Buffett Cancer Center at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, his visionary leadership helped create the largest public-private partnership in Nebraska's history.

Dr. Cowan's achievements reached far beyond Nebraska. He was appointed by President George W. Bush to serve on the National

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Cancer Advisory Board from 2002 to 2008, received the 2019 Appreciation Award from the Cattlemen's Ball of Nebraska, and authored over 240 scientific papers. His work advanced the field of cancer treatment and improved lives Nationwide.

Drawing from his personal experiences with cancer, both as a physician and family member, Dr. Cowan brought empathy and compassion to patient care. Known for his warmth and approachability, his legacy endures in the lives he touched and the advancements he championed.

Nebraska's thoughts and prayers are with Dr. Ken Cowan's wife, Dr. Alison Freifeld, their two daughters, and extended family. His dedication to service and compassion will be dearly missed.

HONORING CAPTAIN JOHN
"GIDDYUP" BUNCH FOR HIS
WORK SERVING AMERICA'S VET-
ERANS

HON. ANDY HARRIS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Captain John "GiddyUp" Bunch for his extensive work serving America's military veterans.

A Marine veteran himself, Captain Bunch provided his first free fishing charter to an Army combat veteran in 2005, an outing that led to Bunch founding the non-profit organization Operation Open Arms.

Over several years, Capt. Bunch and Operation Open Arms facilitated unique recreational experiences for almost 4,000 service members, paid for more than 100 weddings for veterans, and provided a broad array of other services to our nation's heroes.

Bunch's devoted, tireless, and effective work through Operation Open Arms provided a vital service to his brothers and sisters in arms by welcoming them home, showing them the gratitude of their communities, and frequently by directly meeting their needs.

On behalf of the People of the Maryland's First Congressional District, I would like to express sincere thanks and appreciation to Captain Bunch for his tireless efforts and work.

RECOGNIZING PARK COUNTY
COMMISSIONER DICK ELSNER

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Richard "Dick" Elsner of Park County, Colorado for his service to the people of Fairplay, Alma, Bailey, and other rural communities, on the Park County Board of County Commissioners.

During his time in office, Commissioner Elsner, worked across regions and party lines to help the people of Park County. He has been dedicated to ensuring that rural communities have a voice at the state and federal levels. As Vice Chair of the Central Front Range Transportation Region, he secured

funding for a \$3.5 million transportation hub in Fairplay. He also played a key role in seeking to re-establish healthcare access to Park County, a community that has been underserved for decades. His dedication to public service has left a mark on Colorado, and his presence will be missed.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's Seventh Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Commissioner Elsner for his time with the Park County Board of County Commissioners and sincerely thank him for his contributions to the Colorado community. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF
SLEEPY EYE MAYOR WAYNE
PELZEL

HON. BRAD FINSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Wayne Pelzel, a friend, public servant, and fellow southern Minnesotan who is retiring from eight years of service as the Mayor of Sleepy Eye.

Since his election in 2016, Wayne has faithfully served the people of Sleepy Eye and the greater Brown County community, working alongside the city council and city staff to understand the needs of its residents and improve the lives of those who call Sleepy Eye home.

In his two terms as mayor, Wayne oversaw a period of growth and revitalization for Sleepy Eye, bringing new life to Main Street, welcoming new businesses to town, expanding housing, and growing the city's recreational opportunities.

While Wayne leaves behind big shoes to fill, his tenure of dedicated service to the City of Sleepy Eye will be remembered by all of us for years to come.

I congratulate Wayne on his well-deserved retirement. I thank him for his leadership and his service to our southern Minnesota community. I wish Wayne and Pattie all the best in this next chapter.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SYLVIA R. GARCIA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, due to illness, I was unable to vote on January 7, 2025. Had I been able to vote, I would have voted: No on Roll Call No. 6, H.R. 29—The Laken Riley Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSH BRECHEEN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained because of family obliga-

tions and was unable to cast my vote on H.R. 29 and H.R. 23. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 6, and YEA on Roll Call No. 7.

HONORING JUDGE ROBERT L.
DOYEL FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE
CENTRAL FLORIDA COMMUNITY

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Robert L. Doyel served his country with the U.S. Navy at Vietnam, where he oversaw meals for 10,000 soldiers, and as a Circuit Court Judge in Central Florida from 1995 through 2010.

Judge Doyel's passion for the underdog was a result of his humble upbringing in Shawnee, Oklahoma, as the youngest of Ruby Doyel's 10 children—and the only one to graduate college. After one winter living with his family in an old chicken coop, Judge Doyel worked through high school and college, graduating from the University of Oklahoma with degrees in Accounting and Law. He was an attorney in Oklahoma before becoming a law professor at Ole Miss, where colleagues included former Washington NFL star and future Ole Miss Chancellor Robert Khayat, and students included future novelist John Grisham.

When he registered his son Gregg for youth baseball in 1978 in Oxford, Mississippi, Judge Doyel learned the city Civic League was still segregated. Having already committed to coaching, Judge Doyel stayed that summer but made it his mission to destroy the league. He recruited other white families in 1979 to the Oxford Parks Commission, and the segregated league soon folded.

Judge Doyel earned his Masters of Law and Doctorate of Juridical Science degrees from the University of Wisconsin in 1984, and taught at Mercer's School of Law before moving to Winter Haven, Florida. He was a defense attorney, then a Circuit Judge specializing in family law. The title of his book on the subject brims with his fearless personality: "The Baby Mama Syndrome".

In retirement with Chelle, his wife of 37 years, Judge Doyel advised local Democratic Party leaders, served on the board for the Rainbow Ridge LGTBA Democratic Caucus of Polk County, and advocated fiercely for rape-kit testing and victims of domestic violence.

Judge Doyel died November 1, 2024, at age 79.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for Roll Call Vote No. 3, Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 5, I would have voted Nay.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote No. 4, Motion to Commit H. Res. 5, I would have voted Yea.

Had I been present for Roll Call Vote No. 5, Agreeing to H. Res. 5, I would have voted Nay.

HONORING ROSA FIGUEROA

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rosa Figueroa as she retires after 18 remarkable years as the Director of the LaGuardia Community College Small Business Development Center (SBDC). In this vital position, Rosa oversaw the Center's small business services and spearheaded economic development initiatives that has left a lasting legacy. Her tireless dedication and leadership have been instrumental in ensuring the success and growth of small businesses, particularly those in the Sunnyside, Woodside, and neighboring Queens communities.

Rosa's commitment to fostering small business development has had a profound impact on Queens and New York City as a whole. Notably, she has been a staunch advocate for minority and women-owned entrepreneurs, providing them with the resources and support needed to thrive in a competitive market.

The LaGuardia SBDC assists approximately 3,000 small businesses across Queens, New York each year through its comprehensive advising and education programs. Recognizing the crucial role these small businesses play in New York City's economy, Rosa ensured that the SBDC was an accessible and valuable resource for all small business owners. Her years of dedicated service have positioned the LaGuardia SBDC to continue its mission of supporting small businesses well into the future.

In addition to her outstanding role at the SBDC, Rosa has served on numerous boards and as a member of various business, trade, and civic organizations. Through these roles, she has tirelessly promoted small business and community partnerships, fostering local economic vitality. Rosa has received numerous accolades for her exceptional service and unwavering commitment to our state and community.

On behalf of the small business community in Queens, I extend my deepest gratitude to Rosa Figueroa for her unwavering dedication and significant contributions. Her efforts have made our city a better place to live, work, and launch a business. I am honored to recognize and congratulate Rosa on her well-deserved retirement and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 6 and NAY on Roll Call No. 7.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, due to the devastating wildfire affecting my district and Southern California I missed the vote on final passage for the Illegitimate Court Counteraction Act, H.R. 23. Had I been present I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 7.

While I do believe we would have produced a much better bill had it gone through regular order and received a markup in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, recent events have made it vital to pass a strong legislative response to the ICC.

The ICC's recent illegitimate, politically motivated, and legally spurious decision to issue arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant (despite having no jurisdictional or factual basis to do so) led me to now support this legislation despite my procedural concerns. Had I been able to, I would have voted to pass this bill.

However, by January 8th, thousands of homes, businesses and other structures had been destroyed and, devastatingly, several Los Angelinos were killed and many more injured as a result of devastating fires in and around the 32nd Congressional District. Given these developments, I felt it was necessary to return to my district that day which made me unavailable to vote YEA on H.R. 23 the following day when this measure came to a vote.

RECOGNIZING A. MICHAEL HICKOX

HON. AARON BEAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contributions of A. Michael Hickox and his retirement as the Property Appraiser in Nassau County, Florida.

For 12 years, Mike has been an amazing public servant, committed to fairness and customer service.

Let's be honest: being a property appraiser is one of the toughest jobs around. But Mike has done it well and leaves the office in a much better place.

While he was leading, Mike was also President and on the boards of the Florida Association of Property Appraisers, Nassau Education Foundation, and Nassau County Economic Development Board.

To put it simply, Mike has spent his career serving others.

Mike may not be our property appraiser anymore, but I know he's not done. I can't wait to see what he does next.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mike on a job well done.

RECOGNIZING CATERPILLAR INC.

HON. JAKE ELLZEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. ELLZEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a true American success story—a company I'm proud to say calls the Sixth Congressional District of Texas home—Caterpillar Inc.

This week kicks off a celebration of 100 years of hard work, innovation, and industry leadership by this iconic company. In 1925, the Holt Manufacturing Company and the C.L. Best Tractor Co. came together to form what is now known as Caterpillar. Since then, they have been at the forefront of building the machines that build the world.

From their first track-type tractors pulling harvesters in California's fields to the cutting-edge autonomous equipment and engines they produce today, Caterpillar has shaped how we live, work, and connect.

In Texas, where we pride ourselves on dreaming big and building even bigger, Caterpillar's role is front and center. Their equipment helps pave the roads, build the bridges, and support the energy projects that power not just our state but the entire country. They're not just part of the Texas story—they're helping write it.

A company that has helped build our entire nation could be located anywhere, but they're not just anywhere; they're in Texas. And as our State and my District continue to grow, I am proud to have them as part of our community.

As Caterpillar celebrates 100 years, I want to extend my appreciation to their team for all they have accomplished—and for all they will continue to do—to help our communities and our country thrive.

RECOGNIZING KENNETH SCHWARTZ' DEDICATION TO HIS NATION AND HIS COMMUNITY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ken Schwartz of Superior Township, Michigan, on the occasion of his retirement from the position of Township Supervisor.

Ken was born in Michigan in 1952. Raised and educated in suburban Detroit, he graduated from Cherry Hill High School in Inkster, Michigan in 1970. In 1971, Ken joined the United States Air Force and was stationed with the 56th Tactical Fighter Wing at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona. He served as a member of the hospital squadron for over three years until being honorably discharged in 1975.

After his service, Ken attended Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn before transferring to the University of Michigan in 1976 where he studied philosophy, history, and political science. After graduating, he began a new mission in life as a law student at the Cooley Law School in Lansing. Once he passed the bar exam in 1985, Ken embarked

on a long and successful law practice in Ypsilanti.

Along the way to being elected Superior Township Supervisor, Ken also was elected and appointed to many offices including the Washtenaw County Road Commission, Washtenaw County Commissioner, and is currently serving as a Superior Township Trustee. In keeping with his concern for the health and welfare of our veterans, Ken was a founding member of the Washtenaw County Veterans Affairs Commission and was elected as its Chairman in 2012.

In his position as Superior Township Supervisor, Ken set a framework by encouraging and managing selected land for development and growth, keeping the local debt reasonable, and preserving the financial assets of Superior Township. His leadership saw an improvement to township services like safer drinking water, good quality roads, and more responsive fire and police services.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Ken Schwartz. Though he will be stepping down as Supervisor, he will remain on the Board of Trustees and will continue serving his residents. I thank him for his service and wish him the best as he enters this next chapter of his life.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSH GOTTHEIMER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, I missed the following votes, but had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call No. 6.

HONORING ELIZABETH FINN

HON. GREG STANTON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Judge Elizabeth "Ellie" Finn, who passed away on December 27, 2024, following a long battle with ovarian cancer. For over four decades, Ellie served with distinction on Arizona's municipal benches, dedicating her career to building a more equitable and compassionate justice system, particularly for survivors of domestic violence and those impacted by mental illness.

Born in 1947 in New Haven, Connecticut, Ellie moved to Arizona as a young girl. Her parents, Herbert B. Finn and Ruth G. Finn, instilled a deep commitment to public service and justice in Ellie and her sister, Alice Finn, from a young age. She shared 56 years of love and partnership with her husband, Edward Turner. Together, they raised two children, Jesse and Sarah, nurturing the same sense of social responsibility that guided Ellie's own life.

Ellie earned her law degree from Arizona State University in 1972, before joining her parents and forming Arizona's first majority-female law firm, Finn, Finn, & Finn. In 1979, Ellie was appointed to the Phoenix Municipal Court, making her one of the youngest judges in Arizona. After retiring from Phoenix in 2002,

she became the presiding judge of the Glendale City Court—a position held for nearly two decades.

Throughout Ellie's tenure in law, she brought a renewed focus to issues previously overlooked in the judicial system. She championed specialized courts, including those addressing domestic violence, mental health, and homelessness, ensuring that Arizona's municipalities take a holistic approach to justice. She never lost sight of the human dimension of her work, molding a style of jurisprudence that takes into account people's lived experiences and reflects her passion for building a justice system that better serves all Arizonans. Her principles, composure, and leadership garnered local and national recognition, including honors from the American Bar Association, the State Bar of Arizona, and the Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence.

Ellie's life embodied the principle of using one's gifts and passions to uplift the community. Her trailblazing spirit, advocacy for domestic violence survivors, and enduring impact on Arizona's courts will continue to guide our pursuit of justice in the years to come. We honor her memory, extend our deepest condolences to her family and loved ones, and remember her unwavering commitment to serving those most in need.

I thank Ellie and Godspeed.

HONORING THE INAUGURATION OF SAN FRANCISCO MAYOR DANIEL LURIE

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rose to congratulate Daniel Lurie, the 46th Mayor of the City and County of San Francisco. Daniel Lurie is an innovative, empathic leader elected with a call to service, change and accountability.

Although he is San Francisco's first mayor since 1911 to win office without previously serving in government, Daniel Lurie is well known for his innovative approach to solving entrenched issues and delivering results for San Francisco. As the founder of Tipping Point Community, Mayor Lurie launched the Bay Area's largest anti-poverty organization, directing over \$500 million toward solutions for housing, job creation, and essential services. Under Mayor Lurie's leadership, Tipping Point spearheaded construction of a first-of-its-kind affordable housing building at 833 Bryant Street, a project that came in on time and under budget with good-paying union labor. Mayor Lurie also led the bid to bring Super Bowl 50 to the Bay Area in 2016, making it the most philanthropic Super Bowl in NFL history, and founded The Civic Joy Fund in 2023, bringing more art, music, and enthusiasm to our city streets.

Throughout his career, Mayor Lurie has set new standards for impact and partnership, including innovative public-private collaborations that uplift communities. Mayor Lurie's priorities include ensuring safety and vibrancy in all neighborhoods, as well as economic growth. He is entering City Hall effective from the start having just negotiated a hotel strike settlement

with higher wages for our union workers and stability for our vibrant hospitality industry.

Born and raised in San Francisco, Mayor Lurie lives in the City with his wife, Becca Prowda, and their two young children.

I congratulate Daniel Lurie, his mother Mimi Haas, his father Rabbi Brian Lurie, and their entire family, and look forward to working with Mayor Lurie toward a thriving San Francisco for all.

HONORING UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE POLICE CHIEF PAUL DEAN

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor University of New Hampshire Police Chief Paul Dean and to wish him well as he retires from an impressive career in law enforcement.

As a law enforcement officer for nearly 40 years, including the last 35 as a member of the University of New Hampshire Police Department, Chief Dean has worked tirelessly to make UNH and the State of New Hampshire safer and stronger. A testament to his commitment to the UNH community, Chief Dean was named the department's chief in 2011, continuing his excellent and important work. As Police Chief and Associate Vice President for Public Safety and Risk Management, Chief Dean guided UNH through the COVID-19 pandemic as the campus remained open for students, faculty, and staff and ensured UNH returned to normal activities as safely and as quickly as possible.

A nationally recognized leader in campus law enforcement and public safety, Chief Dean is the Immediate Past President of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators. Throughout his tenure at UNH, Chief Dean has been a champion of mental health training and accessibility for his officers and staff. Under his leadership, the UNH Police Department has remained fully accredited by CALEA and IACLEA during Chief Dean's tenure. On behalf of my constituents in New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I extend my gratitude to Chief Paul Dean for his exceptional service as the University of New Hampshire's Chief of Police. I join all Granite Staters in thanking Chief Dean for his leadership, professionalism, and contributions to making the community safer. I wish him and his family all the best as he embarks on the next chapter in his career.

I congratulate Chief Dean on a job very well done.

HONORING ANDY KRINER

HON. NICHOLAS J. BEGICH III

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. Speaker, it is with great reverence that I rise today to honor the life and memory of Andy Kriner, a longtime resident of Alaska, and a beloved member of the community. Mr. Kriner was the owner of

Kriner's Diner in Anchorage, which he founded in 2010. The diner became well-known for its great food and its warm, welcoming environment, rooted in the values of family, friendship, and community. It is an honor to stand before you today and pay tribute to the legacy he left behind.

Mr. Kriner embodied true American values and integrity through his commitment to advocating for small businesses in the face of adversity and standing firm in the face of government overreach. Andy was a man who deeply understood the importance of giving back. Every year, he distributed more than 400 Thanksgiving dinners to anyone who came by his diner, with no questions asked. This annual tradition demonstrated his dedication to service and his commitment to standing up for what was right, making him a pillar of our Alaskan community.

Mr. Kriner is survived by his wife, Norann, of 45 years, as well as his three children and six grandchildren. His legacy will live on through the business he built, the family he cherished, and the community he enriched.

HONORING COLONEL ROBERT
BARTRAN

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Colonel Robert Bartran's service, career, and accomplishments. For over 36 years, he served selflessly in the Mississippi Army National Guard.

After earning his commission in 1995 from the Officer's Candidate Course, he began a long and distinguished career. He holds an associate's degree from Hinds Community College, a bachelors degree from the University of Southern Mississippi, and a masters degree from Liberty University. His military education includes Basic Training, the Engineer Officers Basic and Advanced Courses, the Command and General Staff Officer Course, and many other military and civilian law enforcement schools, as well as courses in transportation, human resources, maintenance, and leadership.

He served at the platoon, company, battalion, major subordinate command, and state levels. Throughout his distinguished service, Colonel Bartran exhibited extraordinary vision, unwavering professionalism, dynamic leadership, and deep compassion. He served across the United States and around the world, including in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and Afghanistan. His years of experience and training in law enforcement, border security, and criminal justice made him an invaluable asset to counterterrorism, counter-narcotics initiatives, and counterinsurgency operations. His exceptional management skills and profound concern for the well-being of all soldiers culminated in his role as the Director of the Mississippi National Guard Counterdrug Program.

Colonel Bartran's distinguished career is marked by his numerous awards and decorations, a testament to his exceptional service. Among his accolades are the Bronze Star Medal, seven Meritorious Service Medals, three Army Commendation Medals, the Iraq Campaign and Afghanistan Campaign Medals,

the Humanitarian Medal, and the Air Assault Badge, along with numerous other federal and state awards. These honors reflect his dedication and commitment to his duty, inspiring pride and honor in all who have served alongside him, including myself.

His commitment to his family, his service to our country, and his contributions to Mississippi are testaments to his character. Colonel Bartran is a true American hero, a proud Mississippian Guardsman, and a man for whom we are immensely grateful.

RECOGNIZING CHAFFEE COUNTY
COMMISSIONER GREG FELT

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Greg Felt of Chaffee County, Colorado for his service to the people of Salida, Buena Vista, and Poncha Springs, on the Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Felt is a dedicated public servant who has served the people of Chaffee County for much of his life. He led the county's response to the Decker Fire and guided public health efforts as Board of Health Chair during the pandemic. He has spent his entire life on or around the Arkansas River and has gained a unique perspective on our natural resources. With his expertise, he served as the Director for both the Upper Arkansas and Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy Districts to help protect Colorado's Water and was appointed by Gov. Jared Polis to represent the Arkansas River Basin on the Colorado Water Conservation Board. Commissioner Felt created a lasting impact on the Arkansas River, and for Chaffee County, and his presence will be missed.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's Seventh Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Commissioner Felt for his time on the Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners and sincerely thank him for his contributions to the Colorado community. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

WISHING RANDY HAGEDORN A
HAPPY RETIREMENT

HON. MIKE FLOOD

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the remarkable career of one of Norfolk's most beloved community leaders, Randy Hagedorn, following four decades with the Norfolk Family YMCA.

Under Randy's leadership, the Norfolk Family YMCA experienced transformative growth. From leading an annual fundraiser that generates hundreds of thousands of dollars to support local scholarships and programs, to spearheading a successful \$13 million campaign for a major expansion in 2019, Randy's dedication has left a lasting impact on our community. These achievements have cemented the YMCA as a cornerstone of Nor-

folk's community life and serves as a model for excellence across Nebraska.

Randy's community engagement extends beyond the YMCA. For over 30 years, he has officiated football and basketball games, including NCAA events and NAIA national championships. His exemplary service earned him the prestigious 2024 NAIA Larry Lady Officiating Award.

As Randy steps into retirement, he leaves behind a thriving Norfolk Family YMCA with nearly 12,000 active members—a reflection of his vision, leadership, and dedication. His legacy will continue to shape our community for years to come.

On behalf of the people of the First District, I thank him for his service throughout his extraordinary career. It will have a big impact on our community for years to come. We wish him the best in his retirement as he begins this next chapter.

HONORING THE CAREER AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF MR. VERNATIUS
FRANK THOMSEN

**HON. AUMUA AMATA COLEMAN
RADEWAGEN**

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career and accomplishments of Mr. Vernatius Frank Thomsen. In June of 1986, Mr. Thomsen began his military career and enlisted in the U.S. Navy serving two tours on board the U.S. Sub-tender USS *Proteus* AS-19, and one tour on board the guided missile destroyer USS *Lynde McCormick* DDG-8 within the supply department and Master at Arms Division. He remained in the US Navy Reserve until August 1994. In May of 1998 he became the first USCG Reservist for American Samoa and served on active duty at the USCG Marine Safety Detachment (MSD), American Samoa until September of 2006. He continued his uniformed duties as a Reserve Maritime Enforcement, Senior Chief Petty Officer in the United States Coast Guard until his retirement in September 2018. In April 2007 Mr. Thomsen was hired as the Assistant Supervisor for the USCG Marine Safety Detachment. In November of 2011 he was designated as the Command Intelligence Officer for American Samoa, representing the Captain of the Port Sector Honolulu. From May 1998 to January 2025, Mr. Thomsen dedicated over 30 years of exceptional service to the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), culminating in his role as Deputy Supervisor of the Marine Safety Unit (MSU) in American Samoa.

Throughout his tenure, he served as the backbone of continuity in a unit subject to annual personnel turnover, ensuring seamless operations and unwavering support to USCG missions. His steadfast leadership, technical expertise, and unyielding commitment to mission readiness have left an indelible impact on the maritime community of American Samoa. Mr. Thomsen's multifaceted duties encompassed training of incoming personnel, acting as a liaison with federal and state agencies, and serving as the operational leader in the absence of the Commanding Officer. His roles included conducting safety workshops with Federal and State agencies for the maritime

community, Marine Casualty Investigator, Commercial Fishing Vessel Examiner, Port State Control Officer, Foreign Tank Vessel Inspector, Explosive Handling Supervisor, Federal On-Scene Coordinator Representative, Pollution Investigator, Facility and Security Inspector, and Collateral Duty Intelligence Officer. He skillfully led and assisted numerous search and rescue missions, environmental protection operations, and vessel casualty responses, safeguarding lives, property, and the marine environment. His quick thinking and calm under pressure have saved dozens of lives and mitigated multiple disasters contributing immeasurable benefit to the overall health and safety of our beautiful islands. He has led multiple workshops and training programs to pass on his wide breadth of knowledge and prepare the next generation of maritime officers. His work in the community has also had a strong humanitarian benefit demonstrating strong Samoan cultural values of service and compassion.

Mr. Thomsen's personal military decorations are highlighted by two Coast Guard Commendation Medals, two Coast Guard Achievement Medals, four Coast Guard Commandant's Letter of Commendation, and eight Meritorious Coast Guard Team Awards. Mr. Thomsen's enduring contributions reflect his deep commitment to the Coast Guard's core values of Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty. His legacy is one of steadfast leadership, selfless service, and unwavering dedication to the safety and well-being of the maritime community in American Samoa and the surrounding islands. He will spend his well-deserved retirement with his wife, Denise Loretta Thomsen, his children, Vitoriao'a'ana and Frank III, and with the gratitude of the American Samoan people. His retirement ceremony will be held on January 14, 2025.

HONORING MIKE BYRNE

HON. CLIFF BENTZ

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning along with Congressman LAMALFA to honor a constituent for his decades of selfless advocacy on behalf of his family, his community, and his fellow farmers and ranchers.

Throughout a life of tireless work on his family's legacy cattle ranch with origins reaching back to the founding decades of two states, Mike Byrne has gone above and beyond at home in the Klamath Basin and around the country to support his community and enhance the legacy created by his family.

Mr. Byrne's family first came to the Klamath Basin in the 1860's, developing large-scale ranching operations on hundreds of thousands of then unclaimed acres in Klamath County, Oregon, and Modoc County, California. The family has a personal relationship with the Klamath Project since its inception, as the initial holdings of Jesse Carr were taken via eminent domain by the federal government for the construction of the Clear Lake Reservoir after the Klamath Project was authorized in 1902. Remaining acres that once comprised the initial family holdings are still grazed seasonally as an integral part of the summer cattle operations under cooperative management with

the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mike's grandfather W.C. Dalton moved the family from Clear Lake to the shore of the receding Tule Lake and was instrumental in building the D Canal to bring water from Klamath Lake to that area. Dalton sold virgin land to Czech immigrant families—many of whom still are farming—who cleared and planted the area as water was initially delivered and supported the founding of the town of Malin, Oregon.

Mike was born in 1951 to Bob and Betty Lou Byrne. He attended Newell Elementary School and, like all his siblings, was sent on a train at 13 years old to boarding school in California. While attending Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose, California, Mike met his wife Bev at a sophomore mixer. We'd like to congratulate the two on the 50th wedding anniversary they celebrated last year, and for their two grown children Matt and Brianna—each of whom have two grade school boys and help on the family ranch as well.

While attending University of California, Davis, Mike earned a degree in animal science and returned home to help on the ranch any chance he could. He moved home permanently in 1973 to work with his parents and siblings, with his years of school representing the only time he lived away from the ranch. At home, Mike's demonstration of leading by example on the ranch have garnered many treasured long-term employees; integral individuals he has supported and who have supported him for decades.

Mike was happy working the ranch, but in the early 1980's, at the urging of family friend and ranching industry leader Rob Flournoy, Mike was encouraged to pursue what became decades of involvement, volunteerism and support for the agricultural community on three key fronts: supporting agricultural water supply and rights, sustaining public lands grazing and supporting conservation as part of a working agricultural business.

Mike initially became involved in the Modoc County Cattlemen's Association, volunteered heavily, moved through all the officer chairs and was named Cattleman of the Year in 1992. He continued his advocacy at the California Cattlemen's Association, serving as public lands committee chairman (a position he likely held for longer than any other in the organization's history) and Second Vice President from 1989 through 1991. He was also a long-time President of the California Public Lands Council. Balancing his volunteer work with daily needs on the ranch—including the fact that his father was confined to a wheelchair—Mike chose not to accept the offer to move up further in the organization at the time but remained heavily involved.

Mike was exceptionally involved in the fallout from the galvanizing 2001 Klamath water shut off. That event set off a frenzy of activity in the community and Mike participated meaningfully and wholeheartedly, taking dozens of trips to Washington, D.C.—where he was on a first name basis with multiple cabinet secretaries and influenced countless staffers of all political stripes with his unique, disarming sense of humor, participating in countless tours and hearings with federal officials and the media and acting as a principal organizer of The Klamath Bucket Brigade. Mike knew the efforts made by so many at that time were significant and meaningful and he was honored to play a role.

In addition to his role as an advocate during the water shut off, Mike was deeply involved closer to home as Chairman of the Lava Beds Resource Conservation District, which helped to quickly and efficiently distribute relief funding to a reeling local farming community that was suddenly not sure if they would ever farm again. Fortunately, the water has come back on, but, unfortunately, efforts to secure real certainty for the community continue to this day.

He later became deeply involved in the National Cattleman's Beef Association, where he ascended to a national position as Policy Chairman in 2004, and the national Public Lands Council, where he served as President from 2004 to 2006. From those national positions he represented cattle producers in all 50 states, but he always kept his eye on the West and his heart in the Basin.

In addition to leadership roles and meetings, the Byrne family has spent many days in the field demonstrating conservation leadership. Mike and his brother Dan were recognized with the National Resources Conservation Service's nationwide Excellence in Conservation Award in 2004 and the Society for Range Management with the Excellence in Range Management award in 1998. They were also featured in two editions of the conservation ranching publication, *Grazing for Change*. Mike was proud to participate not for personal accolades, but to demonstrate to a wide range of stakeholders the positive possibilities of successful working landscape management and wildlife. Along those lines, he was also very proud of his role in relocating and releasing breeding pairs of sage grouse from Nevada to lekking areas near the original family headquarters that are still grazed annually by the Byrne family.

Mike continues to selflessly attribute the success of his efforts to being blessed with the right history, the right connections, and being in the right place at the right time. Fair enough, but then we can all count ourselves lucky that he took advantage.

While we see hundreds of committed advocates in my office each year, there are two things that make Mike unique.

First is the longevity and breadth of his service. While many people join a single organization and pass through leadership then retire, Mike's willingness to remain involved in multiple organizations providing counsel and support after his term as leader has ended is truly remarkable. He remains Chairman of the local RCD and has just recently completed many terms as board member at the Klamath Water Users Association and the Public Lands Council.

Second is his willingness to stand back from the limelight and deflect credit to others at all times while maintaining consistently good, or if you know Mike very well, you might say great humor—even if you don't quite get it. By being willing to work hard and support the community in bringing diverse groups together without caring who got the credit, Mike followed one of former President Ronald Reagan's political rules and was able to accomplish much.

We thank Mike for his many efforts and his continued support to this day and we stand with the community in saying we appreciate what he has done and thank him for what he continues to do.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to share with my colleagues and the Nation, my regard for an outstanding American.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF
JOSIAH ADAMS

HON. SUZAN K. DeLBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable service of Josiah Adams, who has been an invaluable member of my team since March of 2023. During his tenure in our office, his contributions have made a significant impact.

Josiah quickly became known for his unmatched attention to detail and his can-do attitude. No job was too small, as he consistently went above and beyond to support our office. He always brought a sense of positivity that uplifted those around him. His quick and creative thinking were invaluable assets, ensuring seamless operations both within and beyond our office.

Josiah has shown a strong dedication to public service, and I know that will stay with him as he moves on to new opportunities. I want to thank him for his hard work, his optimism, and the lasting contributions he has made to our team. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Josiah Adams and wishing him all the best in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING CHAFFEE COUNTY
COMMISSIONER KEITH BAKER

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Keith Baker of Chaffee County, Colorado for his service to the people of Salida, Buena Vista, and Poncha Springs on the Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners.

During his time in office, Commissioner Baker worked to improve the lives of residents in his community. He spearheaded Chaffee County Common Ground, a program dedicated to preserving agricultural land and advancing wildfire protections and helped create the Office of Housing to tackle affordable housing and sustainability challenges in the county. Commissioner Baker's dedication to Chaffee County is commendable, and his presence will be missed.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's Seventh Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Commissioner Keith Baker for his

service on the Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners and sincerely thank him for his contributions to the Colorado community. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

HONORING CHIEF IAN
SCHMUTZLER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Police Chief Ian Schmutzler, a leader and public servant who has served the Vacaville community and beyond for nearly three decades. Chief Schmutzler's commitment to public safety and his efforts to strengthen community-police relations exemplify why he is deserving of recognition as he approaches his well-earned retirement.

Chief Schmutzler was born at Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield, California, and has remained deeply connected to the region throughout his life. He earned a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in Criminal Justice from California State University Sacramento, and later completed a professional certificate in Law Enforcement Command from the University of San Diego.

Chief Schmutzler's distinguished law enforcement career began in 1997 with the Oakland Police Department, before he joined the Vacaville Police Department in 2000. Over the years, he has held numerous leadership roles, including Field Training Officer, Detective, Commander of the Field Operations and Support Bureaus, and ultimately Chief of Police. His tenure as Chief has been marked by significant accomplishments. Under his leadership, the department expanded community outreach through initiatives like the Police Activities League (PAL), which has fostered lasting relationships with younger generations. Additionally, Chief Schmutzler secured a \$4.4 million state grant to construct a Real-Time Information Center, positioning Vacaville as a leader in crime-fighting innovation.

Chief Schmutzler's commitment to service extends well beyond his professional duties. He has held leadership positions in organizations such as the Solano County Law Enforcement Administrators Association, Vacaville Police Managers Association, and Leaven Kids, and has served on the boards of the Vacaville Neighborhood Boys & Girls Club and other local organizations. Chief Schmutzler also shares his expertise as an Associate Pro-

fessor of Criminal Justice at Union Institute & University and as an instructor at Napa Valley College's Criminal Justice Training Center, ensuring that future generations of law enforcement professionals benefit from Chief Schmutzler's wisdom and experience.

Alongside his wife, April, Chief Schmutzler has raised their two sons, Jacob and Colin, in Vacaville and plans to spend his retirement in our community he has long served.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting and proper that we honor Police Chief Ian Schmutzler for his service, leadership, and dedication to the Vacaville community. We wish him a fulfilling retirement and thank him for his lifelong commitment to making our community a safer place.

RECOGNIZING THE INTRODUCTION
OF THE ORGAN DONATION RE-
FERRAL IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. JENNIFER L. McCLELLAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 2025

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share my thoughts on how we can improve and expedite the organ donation referral process.

I am proud to co-lead the bipartisan Organ Donation Referral Improvement Act with Representative WITTMAN. The critical legislation will help us understand how the broad adoption of automated electronic organ donor referrals in health systems could help more Americans receive the gift of life.

There are over 100,000 Americans in need of a lifesaving organ transplant. To reduce that number and save more lives, we must improve and modernize the organ transplant process. Modernizing the standard practice—manually notifying organ procurement of potential deceased donors—with an automatic electronic system could lift the reporting burden from busy hospital staff, reduce the risk of human error, and ensure every potential organ donor is referred. This bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services to study the potential for automated electronic donor referrals, reducing the barriers to successful organ transplantation and ultimately saving lives.

The Organ Donation Referral Improvement Act will support the lifesaving mission of the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) located in the historic Jackson Ward in the Fourth District of Virginia. I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress to advance this legislation.