

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

#### HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD remarks submitted at the request of a Virginia Beach constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman of Temple Lev Tikvah, and are a reflection of his views:

INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY—80TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF AUSCHWITZ'S LIBERATION

Israeli author and lawyer Yishai Sarid was born in Tel Aviv in 1965, serving as an intelligence officer in the IDF. His law degree is from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem earning an M.A. Public Administration from Harvard University. His arousing, even disturbing novel, *The Memory Monster* (New York: Restless Books, 2020), raises profound questions reflecting the searing struggle of Israelis to come to grips with the Holocaust's enormous impact on their identity and very lives, with the Shoah's long shadow as constant backdrop. In addition, the genocide's implications touch on the universal human condition and its absurd dimension. As much as human memory is an honored, even reveled, component in the Jewish lexicon laden with lessons, warnings, and guideposts, it carries within it, as the novel's title attests, no less than a devouring monstrous quality.

The mesmerizing account is a confessional report to Jerusalem's Memorial Yad Vashem's chairman of the rise and collapse as well as fall from grace of a once enthusiastic recruit on a sacred national mission of accompanying Israeli high-schoolers, military personnel, VIPs, and ordinary adult tourists to Poland seeking a very brief exposure to a death camp site. The heavy-laden theme is made bearable by a genuine literary talent utilizing a relieving dose of sarcasm and deprecating self-loathing. We do know that biting dark humor was used by the camps' condemned inmates as a survival mechanism in a universe turned upside down.

The author, however, finds tragic, grotesque and Kafkian qualities in a so-called normal post-Holocaust reality where the unnamed book's protagonist becomes consumed by the realization that the past is embedded in the present with "The Memory Monster" threatening to remind us that we cannot escape the past and thus we are destined to be doomed rather than redeemed. Yad Vashem's chairman turns from his respectful position "as the official representative of memory" to someone who enables carrying on painful memories which are bound to exact a heavy price on the living.

The Israeli military delegations' visits do have a commendable educational purpose and value, binding a torturous not too remote past with present able military personnel of a proud Jewish state. Not all the Israeli soldiers have family ties with the Holocaust, some are not from a European background and their ties with Polish Jewry are very tenuous. The sight of Israelis in military uniform is disturbing to some Poles in a land where antisemitism is still present

albeit with a small Jewish community. I vividly recall upon visiting Poland in 2017 and stepping out of the new state-of-art Polin Museum next to the giant Warsaw Ghetto Memorial, an Israeli military group getting ready to conduct a memorial service at the moving site. I introduced myself to a handsome colonel pilot who asked me to intercede with then-President Trump to advance peace between the Israelis and Palestinians.

Leading a day tour of Israeli adults whose goal in Poland was shopping and vacationing, not too serious Holocaust learning, provokes a questioning soul-searching response from their disappointed guide who regards his job as a sacred calling without God's participation, "What's the point of all these recitations? If it is our duty to carry on living, why not live life in all its stupidity?" The narrator's scholarly dissertation was prepared in a book form for the public with the attractive covet of Belzec SS officers exuding confidence.

Belzec is the last of the six major extermination camps on Polish soil to be properly maintained. It is also the place where many of my paternal relatives from Zamosc perished, including my great-grandparents Rabbi Yaacov and Dena Manzis Zoberman. Visiting there in 2017, I led our group of seventeen American Jews in the Kaddish, aware that I was touching my severed-sacred roots.

Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman is the founder of Temple Lev Tikvah in Virginia Beach. Hundreds of his family members were murdered in the Holocaust.

### RECOGNIZING THE 2025 FAIRFAX COUNTY STUDENT PEACE AWARD RECIPIENTS

#### HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the recipients of the 2025 Fairfax County Student Peace Awards.

The Fairfax County Student Peace Awards began with one high school in 2006 to encourage high school aged students to think about peace as both a means and an end, and to recognize young people who work as peacemakers. By 2013, the program was being offered to every public high school in Fairfax County, as well as in many private schools.

Participating high schools choose one Junior or Senior, or one student group active in promoting peace or removing the causes of conflict. Examples of outreach include committing to peace by engaging in activities that strive to end conflict, either locally or globally, promoting the understanding of divisive issues and situations to bridge differences, and working to resolve conflicts among students or members of the community who feel isolated or alienated.

I am pleased to include in the RECORD the names of this year's Student Peace Award winners: Sage Nagle, Annandale High School; Jayden Lee, Centreville High School; Nila Elangovan, Chantilly High School; Mia Martin-

Escandarani, Edison High School; Kiran Ashok, Fairfax High School; Shri Bala, Falls Church High School; Ava Saunders and Grace Varughese, Hayfield Secondary School; Clarissa Dantes, Herndon High School; Muslim Student Association, Justice High School; Essam Jazzar, King Abdullah Academy (KAA); Manas Puri, Lake Braddock Secondary School; Annyah Rizvi, Langley High School; Madison McLaughlin, John. R. Lewis High School; Hunter Guthrie, Madison High School; Ghalia Sakly, Marshall High School; Bushra Eikhamenor, McLean High School; Jennifer Villalobos-Saenz, Mount Vernon High School; Julia DeVera, Mountain View High School; Isaac Rodriguez, Oakton High School; Jonathan Johnston, Quander Road School; Jasmine Sklarew, Robinson Secondary School; Ghazi "Zizo" Hanania, South County High School; Jahnnavi Nandanavanam, South Lakes High School; TJ Send-a-Smile Club, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology; Salaiha Najeeb, West Potomac High School; Simeon Samuel, West Springfield High School; Westfield United Sports, Westfield High School; Harun Khan, Woodson High School.

Mr. Speaker, the efforts of these young people are the building blocks of a more peaceful and tolerant world. I commend them on their efforts and dedication and ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating each award recipient and thanking them as well as Fairfax County Public School System and sponsor organizations for all they have done for our community.

### RECOGNIZING DOMINICAN HERITAGE MONTH AND CELEBRATING THE 181ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

#### HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dominican Heritage Month and to celebrate the 181st anniversary of the Independence of the Dominican Republic, observed on February 27th. This month provides an opportunity to reflect on the resilience, history, and achievements of the Dominican people—both in their homeland and across the diaspora.

Over the past 181 years, the Dominican Republic has overcome profound challenges, from civil wars to military occupations and authoritarian rule. Yet, through it all, Dominicans have demonstrated extraordinary strength and perseverance. Today, more than two million Dominicans call the United States home, with approximately 700,000 residing in New York City alone. In my district, spanning Brooklyn and Queens, the Dominican community is integral to our past, present, and future.

As a Nation, we are enriched by the contributions of Dominican Americans in the arts,

• 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.

culture, sports, government, and business. In my own district, I am especially grateful for the Dominican community's role in shaping our small businesses, civic institutions, and cultural landscape. I am also proud that our community produced the first Dominican American elected Brooklyn Borough President, my friend Antonio Reynoso.

To honor Dominican Heritage Month, I am pleased to recognize six outstanding individuals whose dedication, public service, and leadership continue to inspire future generations. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating: Maria Viera, Sonia Medrano, Socrate Liriano, Vincente Trinidad, Roberto Latingua and Rufina Valdez. These honorees contribute to the vibrant tapestry of New York City.

Their achievements are a testament to the thriving Dominican presence in New York City and beyond. Let us continue to uplift and celebrate the Dominican community, not just this month, but every day.

#### RECOGNIZING DINAH WHIPPLE

##### HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2025*

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dinah Whipple of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in celebration of Black History Month. Dinah Whipple was a monumental figure for educational equality in the State of New Hampshire.

Dinah was enslaved until her emancipation at the age of 21. On February 12, 1781, Dinah married Prince Whipple, who for many years was enslaved by William Whipple, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Dinah Whipple conducted the Ladies African Charitable School for several decades, providing education for formerly enslaved people and their children.

Over two centuries later, her legacy still lives on in New Hampshire with the Dinah Whipple STEAM Academy at the University of New Hampshire. This program offers underrepresented young teens of color the opportunity to explore science, technology, engineering, arts, math, and black history in America for no cost. In addition, the location of Dinah Whipple's trail blazing school is now a stop on the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire.

On behalf of my constituents in New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I recognize Dinah Whipple for her selflessness to New Hampshire's community and history. Now more than ever, it is important to honor and celebrate the lives of individuals who gave back to our communities, and Dinah Whipple's legacy and memory must be honored.

#### RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF FAMILY COUNSELING SERVICE

##### HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2025*

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the 100th Anniversary of

Family Counseling Service (FCS) in Aurora, Illinois. For a century, FCS has been a pillar of compassion, support, and guidance, providing critical mental health and social services to individuals and families in need.

Since its founding in 1925, Family Counseling Service has remained steadfast in its mission to strengthen communities through accessible and comprehensive counseling, advocacy, and outreach programs. Over the years, FCS has expanded its services to address the evolving needs of the community, offering mental health counseling, financial empowerment programs, crisis intervention, and support for survivors of domestic violence.

Through its dedicated team of professionals and community partnerships, FCS has transformed countless lives by ensuring that everyone, regardless of background or financial status, has access to the care and resources they need to thrive. Their century-long commitment to mental wellness and family stability has made an indelible impact on Aurora and beyond.

As they commemorate this remarkable 100-year milestone, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the staff, counselors, and volunteers of Family Counseling Service. Their unwavering dedication, compassion, and expertise have been the driving force behind the organization's success. Through their hard work, they have uplifted individuals, strengthened families, and transformed lives, making our communities stronger and more resilient.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent such an impactful organization in my district. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Family Counseling Service on its 100th Anniversary. Their tireless efforts have enriched the lives of so many, and I am confident that their legacy of service will continue for generations to come.

#### CELEBRATING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

##### HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2025*

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with Representatives JASON CROW and BRITTANY PETTERSEN, to recognize the 30th anniversary of Denver International Airport, a cornerstone of Colorado's economy and a critical gateway to the world. Since opening its doors on February 28, 1995, Denver International Airport—commonly known as DEN—has played a transformative role in connecting Denver and the entire Rocky Mountain region to destinations across the globe.

Denver International Airport is more than just an airport—it is an economic powerhouse. Generating more than \$36.4 billion annually and supporting over 41,000 jobs, it has become the largest economic engine in the state of Colorado. From the beginning, its construction was guided by bold leadership and the support of voters, resulting in a facility designed for the future. Spanning 53 square miles, DEN was built with expansion in mind, with the ability to grow from six to twelve runways to meet increasing demand.

Over the past three decades, Denver International Airport has served nearly 15 billion

passengers and has risen to become the third-busiest airport in North America. With projections nearing 100 million annual passengers in the coming years, the airport continues to evolve, ensuring it remains a world-class hub for air travel. Its iconic tented terminal, with 21 Teflon peaks, is recognized around the world and symbolizes Colorado's welcoming spirit and pioneering ambition.

Beyond its economic contributions, Denver International Airport has been a leader in sustainability and inclusiveness. Through innovative construction and operational practices, it has demonstrated environmental responsibility while fostering opportunities for a diverse workforce. The airport's Center of Equity and Excellence in Aviation has been instrumental in creating partnerships with local businesses and developing career pathways for underrepresented communities.

Denver International Airport is also a champion of Colorado's unique character, offering travelers a true taste of the state through its locally inspired concessions, dedicated volunteer ambassadors in cowboy hats, and the world's largest airport therapy animal program. As a result, Denver International Airport is not only a transportation hub but also one of Colorado's most recognizable cultural ambassadors.

As we celebrate this milestone, we reaffirm our commitment to maintaining and enhancing Denver International Airport's role as a gateway to the Rockies and beyond. Its continued growth and innovation will ensure that it remains a vital link in our Nation's transportation network for generations to come.

On this 30th anniversary, we ask our colleagues to join us in recognizing the enduring impact of Denver International Airport and the many individuals who have contributed to its success.

#### IN MEMORY OF MR. BOBBY BEAGLES

##### HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2025*

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the life of my good friend, Mr. Bobby Beagles, who passed away on February 16, 2025, and is survived by his loving wife, Vickie, son, Thomas, daughter, Rachel, and his five grandchildren. Bobby was a loyal friend of mine for almost 60 years who dedicated his life to advocating for Florida's agriculture industry. Born on April 6, 1942, in Samson, Alabama, Bobby later moved to Florida, where we shared an alma mater, Maynard Evans High School, and community, Pine Hills, Florida. Following his graduation in 1961, Bobby began his lifetime service to the Central Florida community.

Bobby first served as an area representative for the Communications Workers of America for over 20 years. Representing an area of Florida that stretched from Jacksonville to Tampa, it was through this opportunity that Bobby first developed his passion for the political arena, an opportunity he contributed to his later years of service to Florida's agriculture industry.

From 1993 to 2000, Bobby served as President, Vice President, and Director of the Orange County Cattlemen's Association. It was

during this tenure that he also began serving on the Orange County Agricultural Advisory Board, a committee established as the voice for agriculture within the government of Orange County. Bobby took the lead on several issues but is best known for playing a vital role in the establishment of a vibrant agricultural education program in Orange County Public Schools. Thanks to his leadership, there is now an agriculture program in every middle and high school in Orange County, Florida.

Perhaps Bobby's most well-known role was through his service to the Orange County Farm Bureau. Bobby served in every position within Orange County Bureau and holds the distinct honor of the longest serving President. After his service on the Board of Directors, he continued devoting his time to the Farm Bureau as Executive Director, a position he held for 38 years.

Aside from his professional service, Bobby still devoted his time to growing the agriculture community within Central Florida. Through his cow-calf operation in Christmas, Florida that he established in 1956, serving in multiple capacities with the Central Florida Fair since 1987, serving as Chairman of the Large Animal Evacuation Team to aid livestock during natural disasters and emergencies, and serving on the Orange County Public Schools Career & Technical Education Advisory Board from 2013 to 2022, Bobby dedicated his life to serving Central Florida's agriculture industry.

Bobby was honored for his years of service by receiving many awards and acknowledgements including his induction into the Florida 4-H Hall of Fame, National FFA Honorary American Degree, Florida Farm Bureau Distinguished Service Award, Honorary State FFA American Degree, Partners in Education Award, Certificate of Appreciation for Commitment to Orange County Public Schools, and the Jefferson Award. There is no question that Bobby's commitment to agriculture was everlasting, and his legacy will continue to live on. It is hard to imagine Florida agriculture without Bobby. He embodies exactly what agricultural advocacy works to represent.

Throughout his life, Bobby worked tirelessly to grow, advance, and defend Central Florida agriculture, especially through his commitment to supporting youth involved in the industry. He will forever be remembered as a man of honor, of humility, and as one who served his community with the utmost dedication. I am truly thankful for Bobby's friendship and service to the Central Florida community.

#### RECOGNIZING BRIAN MATHIOWETZ

### HON. BRAD FINSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a community leader and my good friend, Brian Mathiowetz, who received the 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Associated General Contractors last Tuesday.

Brian joined the family business, Mathiowetz Construction, full-time in 1981, working for his father Richard.

Brian quickly proved to be a driving force behind the company's growing success, recognizing early on that good businesses invest in good people.

Across southern Minnesota, Mathiowetz Construction has become a respected name in the industry, relied upon by federal, state, and local partners, as well as commercial and private customers who have trusted Brian and his family business to bring these important projects to completion.

His leadership has grown the now-fourth-generation company into one of southern Minnesota's leading employers. Brian has contributed in many ways to the growth and development of Minnesota's First Congressional District, building many of the roads and bridges that connect us to our families and neighbors.

To me, there is no one more deserving of this Lifetime Achievement Award. I congratulate Brian on earning this accomplishment and thank him for his years of dedication to building a better community for all of us in southern Minnesota.

#### HONORING REVEREND JESSE HAWKINS FOR HIS 2025 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

### HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Reverend Jesse Hawkins, Pastor of the Cathedral of Grace St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church, in Aurora, Illinois, for receiving the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Aurora African American Heritage Advisory Board—a well-deserved recognition of his unwavering dedication and impactful leadership.

The Aurora African American Heritage Advisory Board honors individuals who embody excellence, dedication, and a commitment to the betterment of society. Pastor Hawkins is a shining example of these values, having devoted his life to both spiritual and civic leadership.

Reverend Hawkins was appointed to St. John AME Church in October 1982. For decades, he has dedicated himself to uplifting the people of Aurora, advocating for social justice, and fostering a spirit of unity. His work extends beyond the pulpit, touching lives through mentorship, community service, and outreach programs that provide support and empowerment to individuals and families in need.

Throughout his tenure, Reverend Hawkins has guided the congregation in the development of numerous ministries, including the Agape Connection Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to community outreach and support. His commitment to social justice has made the church's lectern a forum for addressing critical issues, with nationally recognized leaders and speakers gracing the congregation.

Reverend Hawkins holds his relationship with God, Christ, and people as the most valuable aspect of his journey. He shares this journey with his beloved wife, Mary Watson Hawkins, and their son, David Alexander. Together, they have built a legacy of faith and service that will endure for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent such an honorable community leader in my district. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Reverend Jesse Hawkins on receiving

this distinguished recognition. His tireless service and devotion to his faith and community are truly commendable.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 36; YEA on Roll Call No. 37; and YEA on Roll Call No. 38.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. SYDNEY KAMLAGER-DOVE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 36, the vote closed before I was able to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 36.

#### HONORING THE MINISTERS' COALITION

### HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Fauquier County and Vicinity Ministers' Coalition. Since their establishment at Mount Olive Baptist Church in Rectortown, Virginia in 1991 the coalition has focused on faith-based community service, advocacy, and leadership development. The coalition will mark 34 years of faithful service this year on March 8th, which offers us an opportunity to reflect on the Coalition's impact since the time of its founding.

The Coalition was created to unite local ministers in a biblically sound fellowship so they would be well-equipped to provide spiritual leadership throughout the region. The 18 member churches serve as a dynamic force for the Kingdom of God, and their dedication to the principle of unity as described in 1 Corinthians 12:14–20 reflects well on how they approach service and care for the people of Virginia.

The Coalition's commitment to leadership and service in times of challenge such as First Responder Outreach, Homeless and Prison Ministries, and Christian Fellowship Initiatives throughout the region is something I am proud to honor and represent here today. Their initiatives—ranging from community-wide events to spiritual and emotional support in times of crisis—demonstrate an unwavering dedication to the well-being of all residents.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring the Fauquier County and Vicinity Ministers' Coalition and to tell you how proud I am of the work they have done to address critical social and spiritual needs as they strive to build bridges and empower communities. I pray for Christ's guidance as they continue to carry out their mission.

HONORING THEODIA GILLESPIE  
FOR HER 2025 LIFETIME  
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

### HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2025*

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Theodia Gillespie, President and CEO of the Quad County Urban League for receiving the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Aurora African American Heritage Advisory Board—a fitting tribute to nearly four decades of tireless commitment to empowering communities and changing lives.

The Aurora African American Heritage Advisory Board honors individuals who embody excellence, dedication, and a commitment to the betterment of society. Theodia is a shining example of these values, as her lifelong pursuit of excellence and equality has been the foundation of her work, advocating for a “hand up, not a handout” approach that empowers individuals and families to create sustainable career paths and vibrant, thriving communities.

Since joining the Quad County Urban League in 1984 and assuming the role of President and CEO in 1993, Mrs. Gillespie has been a transformative leader. Under her leadership, the organization has experienced tremendous growth in education and workforce development programs, providing countless individuals with the tools they need to build better futures.

Her leadership has earned her numerous prestigious accolades, including: The Best Supporting Organization Award from the Aurora Hollywood Casino, The Good Samaritan Award from WBBM-TV, The Lifetime Achievement Award from the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, and The Legacy Recognition Award from the National Urban League.

Beyond her role at the Quad County Urban League, Mrs. Gillespie continues to serve her community as Chairperson of the Board for The Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry and as a Board Member for East Aurora School District 131 Board of Education, Forefront, and the Dunham Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have such a dedicated leader in my district. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Theodia Gillespie on receiving this distinguished recognition. Her leadership, advocacy, and service have made an indelible mark on the lives of many.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2025*

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes due to recently giving birth. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 51; and NAY on Roll Call No. 52.

HONORING DR. KEITH D. THIBO

### HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2025*

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Dr. Keith D. Thibo, who celebrates forty years pastoring at Bay View Baptist Church in Washington, Illinois and fifty years in full-time ministry on March 2, 2025.

Born and raised in Michigan, Pastor Thibo first attended Bob Jones University before transferring to Maranatha Baptist Bible College in Watertown, Wisconsin. In May of 2010, he received his Doctorate of Divinity from Hyles-Anderson College.

Pastor Thibo met and married his wife, Christine, on December 20, 1978. He was called to Bay View Baptist Church in March of 1985 and, with the support of his wife and daughters, he founded King's Kids Clubs, a children's Bible memorization program. King's Kids Clubs has impacted over 2,000 churches in over 100 countries around the world and thousands of young people. Pastor Thibo has also authored four books on Bible Doctrine and Apologetics. His ministry has not only shaped the lives of his congregants but has made a lasting impact on faith worldwide.

Pastor Thibo's remarkable life of service, faith, and leadership will continue to inspire all who have been touched by his ministry. Please join me in thanking Pastor Thibo for his many years of service.

RECOGNIZING MR. GERARD J. GRIMALDI ON HIS RETIREMENT AND EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR A LIFETIME OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY

### HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 27, 2025*

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a deep sense of gratitude for the opportunity to recognize a great Missourian, Mr. Gerard Joseph Grimaldi, for his exemplary personal and professional accomplishments as he begins his next chapter of life, enjoying retirement. An experienced leader, dedicated professional, and tireless advocate, Gerard serves as a prime example of a true public servant, and most importantly, a kind, caring, and genuine human being.

A Kansas City, Missouri, native, Gerald was born on September 16, 1959, to loving parents, Mary Jane and Frank Grimaldi. Along with his five brothers and sisters, Gerard grew up in the Crestwood neighborhood and their family was active at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, just off Troost Avenue. His parents, with strong Catholic roots, instilled a deep sense of faith, public service, and commitment to others, particularly the underserved, in all of their children.

Gerard would continue his Jesuit education at Rockhurst High School, before attending the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he would graduate with honors in 1980 with a bachelor's degree in journalism. Following graduation, Gerard briefly enjoyed working as a reporter for the Kansas City Labor Beacon,

before joining the staff of U.S. Senator Thomas F. Eagleton. As the Senator's staff assistant, Gerard handled constituent services, health care access, and economic development for the Western region of Missouri.

Known for his dedication, responsiveness, and affable personality, Gerard was hired in 1985 to serve as the District Director for U.S. Representative Alan Wheat, one of my predecessors. In that role, Gerard led the District-based team, while working closely with the Washington, D.C. legislative staff and leading the office's media strategy. Gerard worked on several successful efforts, including a new U.S. Courthouse, Bruce Watkins Drive, and establishment of the Harry S. Truman National historic site. He would serve in that role for a decade, working on behalf of the people of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District.

Following Representative Wheat's unsuccessful bid for the United States Senate in 1994, Gerard continued working for the newly elected U.S. Representative Karen McCarthy, to share his knowledge of the Fifth District and ensure a smooth transition, before joining Kaiser Permanente, a nonprofit health plan in 1995. During his six-year tenure at Kaiser, Gerard would ultimately be elevated to Vice President for Human Resources and Public Affairs. Through this experience, Gerald's knowledge of the local health care system continued to expand, and he was asked to serve on numerous civic organizations, including the Jackson County Mental Health Levy Board of Trustees, where he would serve as Board Chair for several years. Additionally, as I was serving as Mayor of Kansas City during this time, I had the pleasure of asking Gerard to serve on the Mayor's Race Relations Task Force and on the Board of Directors of the Mayor's Corps of Progress.

For the past nearly 24 years, Gerard has worked at Truman Medical Centers (now called University Health), our area's safety net provider, helping to advance issues of health care access and health equity. He has served as the Chief Health Policy and Government Relations Officer, where he serves in a leadership role to help educate and advocate for the hospital system, to ensure adequate local, state, and federal resources are available to meet their mission. While Gerard considers himself a lifelong learner, he has been instrumental in helping to educate others on the health care needs in our region, particularly for some of our most vulnerable populations.

A comprehensive list of Gerard's accomplishments would be too lengthy, but just a few examples of his impact, include: securing post-9/11 funding to modernize the hospital for bioterrorism and mass casualty incidents; leading multiple public election campaigns for property tax levy approval; securing approval of multiple bond issues for capital improvements on two hospital campuses; supporting the Hospital Hill property acquisition efforts and urban renewal attainment; securing numerous Affordable Care Act grants; securing the hospital's selection with MO HealthNet; working alongside dozens of stakeholders to secure Missouri Medicaid expansion; advocating for vital hospital support during the COVID-19 global pandemic; providing community leadership by ensuring outreach and vaccinations were available during the pandemic; securing multiple sources of public funding for a Center for Recovery and Wellness, a substance use disorder outpatient center that

opened in October 2024; and numerous additional legislative accomplishments.

In addition to some of the civic engagements already mentioned, Gerard has served on numerous other professional and civic boards and committees, including with the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Council, National Association of Public Hospitals, Labor Management Council, Missouri Hospital Association, American Hospital Association, Bannister Federal Complex Community Advisory Panel, Saint Thomas More Parish, and more recently, Gerard was honored for his service by being presented with the 2025 Mel and Jean Carnahan Public Service Award, which recognizes individuals who have dedicated their lives to serving the public. Former members of this esteemed body, including Representative Russ Carnahan and Representative Alan Wheat were among the many who attended the ceremony.

Beyond his extraordinary career achievements, Gerard has always been a dedicated family man. He and his lovely wife, Julie, are celebrating nearly 32 years of marriage, and enjoy the company of their four children and respective families, Mary Kate Rohlfs (Brock), Caroline Riese (Ian), Matthew Grimaldi, and Gabrielle Grimaldi, as well as their grandchild, Penelope Rohlfs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please join me and the people of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District, in congratulating Mr. Gerard J. Grimaldi as he retires from a successful and impactful career, having served as a champion and ally for our underserved communities at the local, state, and national levels. Gerard's friendship, positivity, and his infectious and distinctive laugh will forever be cherished. His legacy will continue to impact residents and communities across Missouri and in our beloved Kansas City region, for generations to come. On behalf of my colleagues and a grateful Nation, we wish him a relaxing and enjoyable retirement, and thank him for his dedication and commitment to our community.

HONORING PAUL M. CARROLL, JR.

### HON. GREG STANTON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of an impactful Arizona LGBTQI+ rights advocate and trailblazer, Paul M. Carroll, Jr., who we lost on February 18, 2025, at the age of 61, following a long, hard-fought battle with cancer.

Paul was born to U.S. Air Force Veteran, Paul M. Carroll, Sr., and Margaret Carroll, on April 27, 1963, in Malden, Massachusetts. He spent the early years of his life in Malden where his parents would teach him and his four siblings the values of kindness and service.

Interested in STEM and computer science research, Paul completed a degree in Economics with a concentration in Computer Science and Mathematics from the University of Massachusetts Amherst in 1989. Early in his career, Paul took to heart the lessons taught by his parents—embedding himself in his community and working tirelessly to protect the rights of LGBTQI+ individuals. Paul worked closely with the Pride Board in Boston, where he fought to make our country more inclusive and welcoming for everyone.

Once Paul relocated to Arizona, his passion for service and his entrepreneurial spirit drove him to launch his finance and IT consulting firm in 2004. His firm, JR in Phoenix LLC, provided local business with IT support services, including financial analysis, planning, and accounting. And while Phoenix would remain his forever home, Paul always made time to travel the world with his husband and enjoy the company of his many friends and family.

Much like Boston, Phoenix was blessed by Paul's dedication to building a more inclusive community. He quickly established himself as a civil rights leader in our community and as a passionate defender of every Arizonan's fundamental right to marry who they love. Paul's

impact on Phoenix was felt most deeply during his various tenures on the Phoenix Pride Parade Board. Starting off as an operations volunteer in April 2004, he would later serve as Parade Director, Treasurer, Vice President, and Chair greatly expanding the parade and festival in Phoenix. He became Chair Emeritus in 2010, steering the organization wisely with his wealth of knowledge and financial expertise.

Paul's commitment to Arizona's LGBTQI+ community extended well beyond the Phoenix Parade Board. He helped shape iconic events around the Valley in support of the LGBTQI+ community, like the annual Aunt Rita's Red Brunch Charity Fundraiser, which provides relief for those living with HIV and AIDS. Additionally, Paul was a Board Director for ViVRE and the Volunteer One Voice Community Center Anti-Violence Project, which provides services for people in need, including LGBTQI+-friendly medical services, shelter for homeless youth, and suicide prevention counseling. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Paul.

Paul is survived by his beloved husband, Kevin Moore, his aunt, sisters, nieces and nephews. He will be remembered for his kind, loving nature, and his lifelong investment to move our state toward true liberty and justice for all, will be felt for generations to come. In this spirit of gratitude and remembrance, I extend my heartfelt appreciation for all he has done for Arizona. I thank him and Godspeed.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes due to recently giving birth. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 46; NAY on Roll Call No. 47; YEA on Roll Call No. 48; and YEA on Roll Call No. 49.