

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