

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2025 CONGRESS-BUNDESTAG/BUNDESRAT EXCHANGE

HON. MIKE JOHNSON

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, since 1983, the U.S. Congress (House and Senate) and the German Bundestag and Bundesrat have conducted an annual exchange program for staff members from both countries. The program gives professional staff the opportunity to observe and learn about each other's political institutions and engage in discussion regarding mutual interest.

A staff delegation from the U.S. Congress will be selected to visit Germany from Friday, November 7 to Sunday, November 16, 2025. During this exchange, the delegation will attend meetings with Bundestag/Bundesrat party staff members, and representatives of numerous political, business, academic and media agencies.

A comparable delegation of German staff members will visit the United States from Saturday, December 6 to Saturday, December 13, 2025. They will attend similar meetings in Washington organized by the members of the U.S. delegation.

The Congress-Bundestag/Bundesrat Exchange is highly regarded in Germany and the United States and is one of several exchange programs sponsored by public and private institutions in the United States and Germany to foster better understanding of the politics and policies of both countries. This exchange is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The U.S. delegation shall consist of experienced and accomplished Hill staff who can contribute to the success of the exchange on both sides of the Atlantic. The Bundestag reciprocates by sending senior staff professionals to the United States.

Applicants should have a demonstrable interest in events in Europe. Applicants need not be working in the field of foreign affairs, although such a background can be helpful. The composite U.S. delegation should exhibit a range of expertise in issues of mutual concern to the United States and Germany such as, but not limited to, trade, security, the environment, economic development, health care, and other social policy issues. This year's delegation should be familiar with transatlantic relations within the context of recent world events.

Please note that there is a significant time commitment aspect for those selected for the program. In addition, U.S. participants are expected to plan and implement the meetings and programs for the Bundestag/Bundesrat staff members when they visit the United States.

Members of the House and Senate who would like a member of their staff to apply for participation in this year's program should di-

rect them to submit a resume and cover letter in which they state their qualifications, the contributions they can make to a successful program and some assurances of their ability to participate during the time stated.

Applications should be sent to the Office of Interparliamentary Affairs, HC-4, the Capitol, by 5 p.m. on Friday, August 8, 2025. Please submit your application and any questions to interparliamentary.affairs@mail.house.gov.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP ACT

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my Pacific Partnership Act, co-introduced with Congresswoman RADEWAGEN of American Samoa and cosponsored by 21 of our colleagues. A companion version of our bill was introduced in the U.S. Senate by Senator CORTEZ MASTO of Nevada and Senator ERNST of Iowa.

Scattered across the three traditional Pacific subregions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia are over two dozen jurisdictions collectively known as the Pacific Islands, including twelve independent states, countries in free association and territories. Though small in land area and population, the land plus maritime exclusive economic zones of all these jurisdictions combined exceed the land areas of China and Russia combined, comprising a significant part of the vast Pacific Ocean and our Earth's surface.

The Pacific Islands region remains critical to our national security interests in the Indo-Pacific and advises greater U.S. engagement to advance our shared interests and values, particularly in the context of growing geopolitical competition and threats by our shared adversaries to endanger the pursuit of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

To bolster U.S. engagement with this region, we have reintroduced our Pacific Partnership Act, which passed the House unanimously in the 118th Congress. Our bill supports the tenets of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, the guiding framework of the Pacific Islands Forum, the region's premier multilateral organization with eighteen members across Oceania.

Specifically, this bipartisan, bicameral bill would require the President to develop and submit to Congress a Strategy for Pacific Partnership, extend diplomatic privileges and immunities to the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in the hopes that the PIF will establish a mission to the U.S., direct the President to consult and coordinate with allies and partners in the Pacific Islands region and update certain reports regarding transnational crime affecting the Pacific Islands.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation to sustain and expand U.S. engagement in this critical region.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF HUNTER SPANGLER FOR WINNING THE DIVISION III STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE FOR SHOT PUT

HON. ROBERT E. LATTI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTI. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school athlete from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Hunter Spangler, a junior at Liberty Center High School, has represented his school ably on his way to achieving the Division III State Title for Shot Put at the State Track and Field Meet. Hunter overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in his effort to win the title.

In pursuing the State Championship, Hunter defeated his opponents with an impressive personal record throw of 63 feet 1.25 inches. His hard work and dedication, both on and off the field, in achieving this accomplishment is truly outstanding. He has achieved an impressive season, bringing pride to his school and community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Hunter Spangler of Liberty Center High School. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

RECOGNIZING MATT JANSEN AND HIS SERVICE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Matt Jansen for over six years of outstanding service in the United States House of Representatives working with the House Judiciary Committee, the House Ethics Committee, and my personal office representing constituents living in the heart of New York City.

I value Matt's hard work, his impressive skill set, and his friendship. He has been by my side when I faced the toughest primary challenge of my career, when we fought together to pass the Respect for Marriage Act into law—ensuring marriage equality for LGBTQ+ families across the country, and to make the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act the law of the land.

Matt has worked for the New York Senate Democratic Conference, as a Legislative Aide in the New York Assembly, and as an intern for New York Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND. Matt's journey on the House side of Capitol Hill began as an intern in my Washington, D.C. office back in 2019. He then moved over to the House Ethics Committee and was promoted to Advice and Education Clerk where

• 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.

he helped respond to questions from Members and staff throughout Capitol Hill. Matt returned to my team as a Staff Assistant and Legislative Correspondent. From there, he embarked on a remarkable career with our office, holding nearly every position—from Staff Assistant to Legislative Correspondent to Legislative Assistant, and even a brief stint as Scheduler—until he ultimately became Press Secretary for both my office and the House Judiciary Committee from 2023 to 2025.

Throughout his tenure, Matt brought an impressive blend of professionalism, creativity, and humor to the role. As Press Secretary, he worked tirelessly behind the scenes, ensuring that my office's messages were clear, concise, and timely. He is an excellent writer and worked quickly to ensure our communications were relevant and far-reaching. He continuously found ways to elevate our communications—from quick video clips to informative electronic updates, to printed newsletters. Matt worked to prepare me for appearances on MSNBC, NY1, and other local New York City television news programs. He worked closely with reporters to book interviews with major news outlets like the New York Times and the Washington Post.

Matt's commitment to learning led him to be an active and consistent participant in the many communications classes offered in the House—even serving as an instructor from time to time. He routinely briefed his Democratic press colleagues on the many Judiciary Committee bills that came to the House floor each week and worked to coordinate the party message on major legislation facing the Congress.

However, his contributions went far beyond just communications. He was always ready to go the extra mile for the team—whether it was accompanying me to events, moderating my town hall, or heading up the Party Planning Committee. His energy was contagious, and his commitment never wavered.

In 2022, Matt took a leave of absence from my official office to be boots on the ground in New York City (NYC) assisting with my reelection campaign. He was a staple at many NYC subway stops, canvassing and connecting with constituents. His hard work and organizing skill helped propel me to a 30-point victory over a fellow Democratic Committee Chair in a tough New York primary.

During his time in my office, Matt made the most of the many experiences available in D.C. From joining me at the White House bill signing ceremony for my Respect for Marriage Act, to escorting Former President Obama during the 2024 Inauguration, Matt was always willing to seize the opportunity.

A proud University Albany alum and Long Islander, Matt brought the New York spirit to our office. Given his love for New York, Matt was always happy to help at events in the district, and I have particularly found memories of marching with him in the New York Pride.

Like many of my constituents, Matt is a frequent visitor to Fire Island Pines, but even a day by the beach won't stop him from creating excellent communications content.

While it's impossible to overstate Matt's loss from my team, I'm glad to know he's staying on the Hill. I look forward to running into him in the Longworth Cafeteria and am excited to see where his career takes him.

HONORING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY
OF AN AMERICAN HERO, SER-
GEANT FRANK S. WRIGHT

HON. JOSH HARDER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. HARDER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the 100th birthday of an American hero, Sergeant Frank S. Wright of Lodi, California. As one of the last surviving members of the original United States Marine Corps Raiders, Sergeant Wright stands as a living testament to the courage, resilience, and dedication to country.

Born in 1924 in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, Sergeant Wright answered the call to serve his country following the attack on Pearl Harbor. At just 16 years old, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps—using a delayed birth certificate and a clever diet of bananas to meet age and weight requirements. His journey took him through boot camp in San Diego and ultimately led to his selection as one of the original Marine Raiders—a pioneering special operations force whose legacy would later inspire the formation of today's elite Marine Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC).

During World War II, Sergeant Wright served with distinction in the Pacific Theater, including in the battles of Guam and Iwo Jima. He was wounded multiple times in close combat, including gunshot wounds at Iwo Jima, where he witnessed the iconic raising of the American flag on Mount Suribachi. Over the course of the war, he served aboard 11 naval vessels and fought in four major campaigns.

Sergeant Wright's valor is recognized by a host of military decorations, including the Purple Heart with two stars, the Combat Action Ribbon with four stars, the Presidential Unit Citation with two stars, and several campaign and service medals. His commitment to the Marine Corps extended beyond the battlefield—he closed out his military service as a Drill Instructor, shaping the next generation of Marines.

Following the war, Sergeant Wright settled in Lodi, where he has lived for decades as a proud veteran and community member. In 2019, he published his memoir, *Battles in the Pacific*, offering a firsthand account of his wartime experiences. In 2022, he returned to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego for the first time since boot camp, honored by the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Sergeant Frank Wright is a Central Valley treasure and a national symbol of American grit and resilience. I am proud to recognize his lifetime of service and sacrifice, and to celebrate his extraordinary 100th birthday. May his legacy continue to inspire future generations.

CELEBRATING WILLA ROBINSON
AND THE LEGACY OF WILLA'S
BOOKS & VINYL

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life and legacy of Miss

Willia Robinson, the founder and steward of Willa's Books & Vinyl, a cultural cornerstone that has stood for 30 years as a beacon of knowledge, dignity, and Black heritage in Kansas City, Missouri. At 84 years old, Miss Robinson is retiring, but her impact, much like the stories she helped preserve, will live in perpetuity.

Miss Robinson's journey with books began in her hometown, Happy Bend, Arkansas. While attending high school in the town, Miss Robinson's desire to uplift others through books was cultivated when she asked her teacher where she could learn about the contributions of Black people to American life. She was told, plainly and painfully, that there were none. Rather than accept that answer, Miss Robinson began collecting books. Her collection started modestly with a few children's titles in which young Black boys and girls could see themselves reflected in the pages.

After graduating high school at 17, Miss Robinson moved to Kansas City in search of opportunity. She came alone, determined to build a better future, and brought with her a dream to showcase Black literature. In time, she married Cledwell Robinson Sr., raised five children, and worked faithfully for the United States Postal Service for nearly three decades. At the USPS, Miss Robinson learned the rhythms of her community, met with people from all walks of life, and began to share the books she had been collecting since high school.

In 1998, during her time at the post office, Miss Robinson experienced the tragic bereavement of her daughter and granddaughter. Despite the grave loss she experienced, she turned her grief into purpose. Miss Robinson began travelling to Salvation Army locations throughout Missouri, rescuing books that others had overlooked. She first sold them from a table at the post office where she worked, but when new federal building restrictions displaced her, she did not abandon her passion. Instead, Miss Robinson began selling her books as a street vendor at the historic 18th & Vine Jazz District, eventually leading to her permanent storefront Willa's Books & Vinyl, which first opened its doors in 2009.

What Miss Robinson created was more than a bookstore, it was a sanctuary. Now located on Troost Avenue, a road long seen as the racial dividing line between east and west Kansas City, Willa's Books & Vinyl became a living archive of African American history and culture. Inside, one could find rare editions, including works by Frederick Douglass, vintage jazz LPs, 45s of soul music, and early issues of historic Black publications. Her collection eventually grew to over 20,000 works. Ensuring these titles ended up in caring hands was an act of resistance, remembrance, and radical love.

What truly makes Willa's Books & Vinyl sacred is what it represents—a space for conversation, education, and community. For three decades, it has welcomed the curious and the committed. Willa's gave countless young people their first introduction to Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, and other titans of Black literature. The store helped college students, local artists, historians, and everyday neighbors reconnect with the richness of Black thought and scholarship.

In Missouri, Willa's Books & Vinyl holds the distinction of being the oldest and longest-

standing Black-owned bookstore in the state. In a nation where Black bookstores have dwindled, where history is too often erased or edited to appease those in power, Willa Robinson stood firm in her mission to make Black stories visible. As she steps into retirement, we must take a moment to not only congratulate Miss Robinson, but to thank her. Thank her for never giving up, for keeping the books alive, and for showing generations of Missourians that literature is more than leisure, it is a form of liberation. Her legacy, rooted in resilience and powered by purpose, cannot be measured in the number of books sold or even the thousands of titles she preserved. It is measured in the minds she opened, the narratives she protected, and the history she helped write.

So today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Miss Willa Robinson for her immeasurable contributions to the cultural, educational, and spiritual life of Kansas City and beyond. As a teenager, Miss Robinson asked a teacher about Black Americans' contributions to our nation's history and was told there were none. From that point forward, she dedicated her life to proving just the opposite. Willa's Books & Vinyl may have started with a question and a few books, but it became a movement. One that will continue to echo for generations.

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF SENECA
EAST HIGH SCHOOL'S BOYS 4 X
800 METER RELAY TEAM FOR
WINNING THE DIVISION III
STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE**

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school track and field relay team in Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. The young men of the Seneca East High School Boys 4 x 800 Meter Relay team have represented their school ably on their way to achieving the Division III State Track and Field Title. The team overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in their effort to surpass all other relay teams in their event.

In pursuing the State Championship, Evan Schiefer, Bradley Smith, Ayden Perkins, and Owen Gahrng defeated their outstanding competitors to win with an impressive time of 7:57.32, a new school record. The members of this very special team have shown that their sport requires an individual effort for a team result. Their hard work and dedication, both on and off the track, in achieving this accomplishment should be commended.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Seneca East High Boys 4 x 800 Meter Relay team. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

HONORING WILLA SHANNON

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Willa Shannon and her service and contributions to Virginia's First District and the Nation.

Willa joined my office as Press Assistant after working for Congressman BOB LATTA of Ohio. She has served our office and our team well. Willa is a highly motivated individual who was energetic about both her work and her relationships. Her work ethic and commitment to service have helped shape my staff into the most effective and successful team on Capitol Hill.

I would like to thank Willa for her many contributions and dedicated service. She has been an invaluable member of my team, and I wish her the best of luck as she moves on to the next chapter of her professional career. May the Lord bless her as she embarks on a new challenge, and I look forward to seeing her continued success in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me to recognize Willa Shannon for her service to Virginia's First District and the Nation.

**HONORING THE LIFE OF JEFFREY
RICHARD SOTH**

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of a dear friend and a giant in the fight for America's workers: Jeff Soth.

Jeff wasn't just a leader in labor, he was a force. As the Legislative and Political Director of the International Union of Operating Engineers, he stood at the helm of one of the most skilled and essential workforces in the world. From power plants and pipelines to roads, bridges, and cranes, the men and women Jeff represented built this country, and he fought for them with everything he had.

Jeff believed, as I do, that labor isn't a special interest, it is the American interest. He understood a fundamental truth: when labor leads, America leads. And because of Jeff, more workers gained access to world-class training. More families found stability, opportunity, and dignity. And more communities saw positive progress and growth.

Over the course of many years working alongside Jeff in our shared mission to champion America's working families, we built a friendship grounded in mutual respect and a deep sense of purpose. We began as partners in the fight, but I stand here today, honored to have called him a dear friend. Jeff was steadfast, sincere, and one of the most loyal people I have ever known. His laughter could lift a room. His word was gold, and his moral compass never wavered.

From serving as mayor of his hometown in Snohomish, Washington, to becoming one of the most respected labor voices in the country—Jeff's prolific career was a testament to what public service should be: selfless, principled, and tireless.

To his family, friends, colleagues, and his IUOE brothers and sisters—I offer my deepest condolences. No words can fill the void he leaves behind. But his legacy lives on in every worker who finds a path, in every project that lifts a community, and in every fight for fairness still ahead.

May God bless Jeff, may He comfort all who mourn him, and may we continue the work Jeff loved, with honor, conviction, and heart.

REMEMBERING JOEL NELSEN

HON. VINCE FONG

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Joel Nelsen, who passed away on July 1, 2025, at the age of 78. For nearly four decades, he served as President of California Citrus Mutual, where he became a leading voice for citrus growers in California and throughout the Nation.

From 1982 to 2019, Mr. Nelsen led California Citrus Mutual through significant challenges to and changes in the agricultural landscape. He worked to ensure citrus growers were represented in key policy decisions related to water, trade, pest management, regulation, and beyond. His efforts helped strengthen the industry and protect the long-term viability of farming in the Central Valley.

Throughout his career, Joel built relationships across the agricultural community, in Sacramento, and in Washington, D.C. He believed in the future of Central Valley agriculture and worked to support family farms and the people who rely on them. He also took time to mentor others in the industry and help prepare the next generation of advocates and leaders.

Joel Nelsen will be remembered for his deep knowledge of the Citrus industry, his decades of service, and his unwavering commitment to the growers he represented. I have no doubt that his legacy will last generations.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Joel Nelsen for his lifelong dedication to California agriculture and the citrus industry.

**RECOGNIZING THE ARMY AND AIR
FORCE EXCHANGE SERVICE**

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I honor the Army & Air Force Exchange Service, the Department of Defense's largest retailer, as the organization reaches a tremendous milestone, 130 years of serving the military community.

Since July 25, 1895, the Exchange has lived out its motto of "We Go Where You Go," providing the best tastes of home to Soldiers, Airmen and Guardians around the world. The Exchange, also known as the PX or BX, is a thriving tax-free benefit that strengthens our nation's military lethality. The Exchange serves those who serve with department stores, restaurants, malls, wellness services, combat uniforms at cost, school meals for military children overseas, a robust presence at

ShopMyExchange.com, a leading credit option and more.

At 130, the Exchange, now based in Dallas, Texas, is among the oldest U.S. retailers in America—and remains a vital part of military readiness. 100 percent of Exchange earnings support critical Quality-of-Life programs. In the last 10 years, the Exchange delivered \$15 billion in value to the military community.

Congratulations to the Exchange on 130 years of serving those who serve. Here's to "going where you go" for many more years to come.

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF MARION
LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL'S BOYS 4 X
400 METER RELAY TEAM FOR
WINNING THE DIVISION III
STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE**

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school track and field relay team in Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. The young men of the Marion Local High School Boys 4 x 400 Meter Relay team have represented their school ably on their way to achieving the Division III State Track and Field Title. The team overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in their effort to surpass all other relay teams in their event.

In pursuing the State Championship, Oliver Huelsman, Justin Knouff, Andrew Pohlman, and Victor Hoelscher defeated their outstanding competitors to win with an impressive time of 3:21.06. The members of this very special team have shown that their sport requires an individual effort for a team result. Their hard work and dedication, both on and off the track, in achieving this accomplishment should be commended.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Marion Local High Boys 4 x 400 Meter Relay team. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

HONORING JOSIE MOTA GOMEZ

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Josie Mota Gomez, a visionary in education, lifelong advocate for youth, and social justice. For more than three decades, Josie has been a pillar of the El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice, located in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, her hometown.

Josie's journey began on a snowy day in February 1975, when she arrived in New York City from the Dominican Republic to reunite with her mother, Melida, who labored for years in a factory to provide a better future for her children. That act of sacrifice would leave an indelible mark on Josie, instilling in her the values of strength, perseverance and service. Accordingly, she began her formal education

at Our Savior School in Williamsburg, learning English and discovering the value of community in a building that would later become home to El Puente Academy—the very school she would help shape decades later.

After attending the High School of Fashion Industries, Josie pursued her passion for communication and earned a degree in Speech Communications from Pace University. A brief stint in the corporate world left her unfulfilled—but a chance meeting with El Puente co-founders Dr. Frances Lucerna and Luis Garden-Acosta changed everything. In 1991, she joined El Puente as a community liaison, launching a lifelong commitment to youth, education, and social justice.

In 1993, Josie played a critical role in the founding of the El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice, the first public high school in the country centered on human rights and social justice. She has served the school for 32 of its 34-year history—guiding students, families, and fellow educators through every transition and triumph. Her leadership has shaped the Academy's identity, grounded in the belief that we are not just here to study history, but to make history.

Along the way, she earned a master's in education from Long Island University and a bilingual counseling license from Brooklyn College, yet she has always been defined not by titles, but by the deep relationships she has built. Josie walks with young people and their families, lifting them up, meeting them where they are, and helping them believe in their own power.

El Puente is not just a workplace for Josie—it is her family. Her four children were raised in its community, and her unwavering presence has come to symbolize its mission. Josie's journey is a testament to the immigrant experience rooted in sacrifice, shaped by resilience and driven by the hope of a better future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Josie Mota Gomez on this special occasion of her retirement. I extend my deepest gratitude for her public service and wish her joy in this next chapter of life.

**HONORING AND REMEMBERING
THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO
PASSED AWAY IN A PLANE
CRASH IN HOWLAND TOWNSHIP,
OHIO**

HON. MICHAEL A. RULLI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. RULLI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the victims of the June 29, 2025, plane crash in Howland Township, Ohio, that claimed six lives.

This tragic loss has taken beloved family members and respected professionals who contributed significantly to the Mahoning Valley. Their influence on the community will endure for generations.

James Weller was the President and CEO of Liberty Steel Industries Inc., a staple of Ohio, Ohio. His passion for his faith and his family inspired him to treat others with respect and dignity.

Veronica Weller, James's wife, was a loving wife, mother, sister, aunt, and friend, making

the community around her a better place. Veronica's involvement with charities showed her true devotion to those in need.

John Weller, son of James and Veronica Weller, was known for his humor and positive outlook on life, spreading love and positivity to those who knew him. John Weller was the vice president of Liberty Steel Industries.

Maria Weller, John's wife, was a volunteer at the St. Edward's food pantry, showing her dedication and love for the community that she sought to make better. Maria's creation of a fashion camp designed to help STEM students showed her willingness to give her time and energy to serve others.

Joseph Maxin, the pilot of the airplane, used his enthusiasm for public service to positively touch the hearts and minds of those he interacted with. Joseph's service in the Youngstown Prosecutor's Office showed his desire and eagerness to keep his community safe.

Timothy Blake, the co-pilot of the airplane, used his fondness for aviation to train the next generation of pilots at Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring and remembering those who lost their lives in this tragic incident.

**HONORING FRIENDSHIP AFRICAN
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
IN CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI**

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate a remarkable institution of faith, history, and service: Friendship African Methodist Episcopal Church in Clarksdale, Mississippi. For more than a century and a half, Friendship AME Church has stood as a steadfast pillar of spiritual leadership, community empowerment, and social justice.

Founded in 1869 by Reverend Thomas W. Stringer, one of the pioneering leaders of the AME Church in Mississippi, Friendship AME has served not only as a sanctuary of worship but as a beacon of hope and advocacy in the Clarksdale community. The land upon which the church was first built was generously given by John Clark, the founder of Clarksdale, and it became home to the first school for Black children in the area—underscoring its early commitment to education and equality.

During the turbulent years of the Civil Rights Movement, Friendship AME provided refuge and became a center for organizing efforts that sought to dismantle segregation and promote justice. It welcomed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rev. Jesse Jackson, and countless other leaders who rallied the community and inspired a generation toward action and faith.

The church's legacy is not only etched in the lives it has changed but also in its architecture—through its red brick Gothic Revival sanctuary and the historic Colonial Revival Haven United Methodist Church, which together symbolize resilience and sacred tradition.

Despite enduring hardships, including a devastating fire, the congregation rebuilt the

church through faith and unity. Now located at 120 Martin Luther King Boulevard, Friendship AME Church remains a testament to perseverance—where, as members say, “The building is historic, but the Church is eternal.”

Under the dedicated leadership of Rev. Darren Thomas, II, the church continues to minister to the spiritual and social needs of its members and neighbors. Pastor Thomas reminds us that the enduring legacy of Friendship AME is rooted in the power of faith, hard work, and unity—a legacy that calls on us all to help build a brighter future for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Friendship African Methodist Episcopal Church for its monumental contributions to faith, education, civil rights, and community uplift. As we celebrate a century and a half years of unwavering service, may we honor its past, embrace its present, and support its mission for years to come.

CELEBRATING DJ ROBERTS AND THE LAWSON AND ROBERTS FAMILIES

HON. PETE STAUBER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor DJ Roberts, a soon-to-be deputy sheriff from Itasca County in Minnesota's Eighth Congressional District, who will be reclaiming his grandfather Robert “Beefy” Lawson's badge number 703 and carrying forward a legacy of heroic service.

Beefy Lawson was a beloved figure. A Korean War veteran, a talented hockey player and referee, and a deputy sheriff whose charisma and selflessness touched countless lives. He was a pillar of our community. Tragically, he was killed in the line of duty, leaving a void in his family and community.

Inspired by his grandfather's example, DJ Roberts has pursued a path of service with remarkable courage. Despite a dyslexia diagnosis, DJ transitioned from a 20-year career in construction to become a corrections officer at the Itasca County Sheriffs Office in 2018. In 2023, DJ bravely returned to school in his 40s to pursue his dream of becoming a road deputy, overcoming mental, emotional, and physical challenges while balancing fatherhood to four children and his duties as a husband.

Today, we celebrate DJ, known to his late grandfather as “Buddy Guy,” for being honored with Beefy Lawson's badge number as a powerful symbol of his commitment to public safety and a full-circle moment for the Lawson and Roberts family. With resilience, integrity, quiet heroism, and strong faith in God, DJ honors his grandfather's memory, inspiring our community by continuing a legacy of service and sacrifice.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF ISABELLA ZAHN FOR WINNING THE DIVISION III STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE FOR THE 200 METER DASH, 400 METER DASH, AND LONG JUMP

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school athlete from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Isabella Zahn, a senior at Coldwater High School, has represented her school ably on her way to achieving three Division III State Titles for the 200 Meter Dash, 400 Meter Dash, and Girls Long Jump at the State Track and Field Meet. Anna overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in her effort to win the title.

In pursuing the State Championship, Anna defeated her opponents with an impressive time of 23.04 seconds in the 200 Meter Dash, 54.56 seconds in the 400 Meter Dash, and a jump of 18–08.50 in the Girls Long Jump. Her hard work and dedication, both on and off the track, in achieving this accomplishment is truly outstanding. She has achieved an impressive season, bringing pride to her school and community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Isabella Zahn of Coldwater High School. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

HONORING SCOTT ACONE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Scott Acone, as he retires from the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Scott first began what would be an extensive career with the New England District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as an intern in 1988. Following the internship, Scott took on a full-time role as a hydraulic engineer with the Water Control Branch, where he performed critical hydrologic and hydraulic analyses for project planning and design, while also taking on the responsibility of managing the New England District's Periodic Inspection Program for dams and hurricane barriers. During this time, Scott became the New England District's expert on ice engineering, responding to numerous ice jam events throughout the 1990s.

In 1999, Scott transitioned to a project management role, where his leadership skills quickly proved to be an asset. As a project manager, and later as Chief of the Military and Environmental Project Management Branch starting in 2010, Scott oversaw several projects that received significant recognition, including the Eastland Woolen Mill Superfund Site, which was awarded both the 2003 National Honor Award for Engineering Excellence from the American Council of Engineering Companies and the 2004 Build America Award for Environmental Remediation from

the Associated General Contractors of America.

In 2013, Scott was promoted to Chief of the Engineering and Planning Division, where he led 140 technical and administrative professionals in planning water resource, environmental, and military projects across New England. Scott was later named Chief of the Programs and Project Management Division in 2016. In this role, Scott oversaw an annual budget of \$500 million in projects across USACE's business lines.

Throughout his career, Scott contributed to many notable projects, including the Elizabeth Mine Superfund Site in Vermont and the Central Artery and Tunnel Stem to Stern Safety Review of the Big Dig Project. Scott's efforts also extended beyond U.S. borders when he provided engineering oversight and review to the Millennium Challenge Corporation for the rehabilitation and raising of the Nacala Dam, an earthen dam in Mozambique, to provide additional clean drinking water to the region.

An engineering professional committed to improving infrastructure throughout New England, Scott is a graduate of the USACE North Atlantic Division's Executive Leadership Development Program and is a member of the USACE North Atlantic Division Regional Management Board and the Society of American Military Engineers. Scott has been awarded several awards recognizing his efforts, including the Joint Civilian Service Achievement Award and the Superior Civilian Service Award.

In addition to Scott's assigned duties and responsibilities with the New England District, Scott volunteered and lent his knowledge and expertise to the USACE's emergency management office to help those devastated in the aftermath of disasters. Scott was deployed many times, including as part of the urban search and rescue team that responded to the 2010 earthquake in Haiti and the urban search and rescue team that responded to Hurricane Katrina. Additionally, Scott assisted the USACE's response team following the attacks on 9/11 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

After three and a half decades of service, Scott will retire from the New England District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the end of June. Scott has diligently served the people of New England, and I wish him many years of well-deserved happiness in retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Scott Acone, and I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing Scott's career and thanking him for his years of service.

HONORING STAN BAKER

HON. BECCA BALINT

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Ms. BALINT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life and legacy of the Venerable J. Stannard “Stan” Baker, who passed away on June 23, 2025, at the age of 79. A devoted deacon in the Episcopal Church and a pioneering advocate for LGBTQI+ rights, Stan's impact on our Nation and on the Commonwealth of Vermont will endure for generations.

Ordained in 2009, Stan served with distinction as Archdeacon of the Episcopal Diocese

of Vermont and as chaplain to retired clergy. His ministry was marked by compassion, humility, and a fierce commitment to justice and healing. In every community he touched, he brought people together, building bridges of understanding and care.

Before his ordained ministry, Stan excelled as a psychotherapist—co-founding BTR Psychotherapy and serving as a Clinical Director and Mental Health Director—offering vital support to individuals and families facing difficult challenges.

Stan's most enduring legacy, however, is his courageous role in *Baker v. Vermont*. As the lead plaintiff, Stan helped secure Vermont's groundbreaking civil unions law, making it the first state in the nation to grant legal recognition and benefits to same-sex couples. This landmark decision marked a turning point in the struggle for equality—a step so bold and historic that it helped lay the legal and moral foundation for marriage equality across the United States.

So many LGBTQI+ Americans today can trace their right to marry the person they love back to the courage of Stan Baker and his fellow plaintiffs, who stood up at a time when few dared to do so. His action was not only a personal stand but a transformational moment in our Nation's history—one that reshaped the legal landscape and inspired a movement.

His life was also a testament to love and partnership. Stan and his husband, Peter Harrigan, were among the first same-sex couples to enter into a civil union in Vermont—and they later married. Their story reflects both the personal and political progress that can emerge from courage and conviction.

Stan was much more than a public advocate; he was a lover of music, a collector of books and fountain pens, a cello and guitar player, and a person of deep faith and generosity. He is survived by his husband Peter, whose grief is shared by all of us who knew and admired Stan.

Today, we remember Stan Baker—not only for the victories he helped achieve, but for the kindness he expressed, the communities he strengthened, and the hope he inspired.

I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring his memory and recommitting ourselves to the values he embodied: justice, dignity, and love for all. May his life continue to guide us, and may we carry forward his legacy with courage and compassion.

CELEBRATING CYPRESS ASSISTANCE MINISTRIES' 35TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MORGAN LUTTRELL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LUTTRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend Cypress Assistance Ministries (CAM) on their 35th anniversary. Located within Texas' 8th Congressional District in Cypress, CAM has spent more than three decades serving as a pillar of compassion and hope for families in need. What began in 1990 as a community effort to distribute food to those in need from the back seat of a sedan has grown into a comprehensive non-profit organization that uplifts thousands of Texans each year. CAM currently operates a year-

round food pantry, two donation centers, educational programs, and workforce readiness classes for those who would otherwise not have the opportunity.

In 2024 alone, CAM distributed 1.2 million pounds of food, helped hundreds of households remain in their homes, and guided countless individuals to a path of self-sufficiency through job training. Behind these numbers are real people, parents, seniors, veterans, and children, whose lives are brighter because of Cypress Assistance Ministries. They have demonstrated the very best of what a community can achieve when it works together.

The tireless work of over 500 volunteers as well as over 40 local churches and businesses proves the resiliency and generosity of the people of Texas' 8th Congressional District and serves as an example to the nation. On behalf of a grateful community and the United States House of Representatives, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to Cypress Assistance Ministries on their 35th anniversary and thank them for their enduring service to our district.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF ANNA ROESSNER FOR WINNING THE DIVISION III STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE FOR THE 100 METER DASH

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school athlete from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Anna Roessner, a senior at Fort Recovery High School, has represented her school ably on her way to achieving the Division III State Title for the 100 Meter Dash at the State Track and Field Meet. Anna overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in her effort to win the title.

In pursuing the State Championship, Anna defeated her opponents with an impressive time of 11.75 seconds. Her hard work and dedication, both on and off the track, in achieving this accomplishment is truly outstanding. She has achieved an impressive season, bringing pride to her school and community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Anna Roessner of Fort Recovery High School. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

RECOGNIZING COLONEL HEIDI DEXTER

HON. JASON CROW

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Heidi Dexter, Commander of Space Base Delta 2, Buckley Space Force Base, as she prepares to move on to her next duty station. I am grateful for her exceptional

service to our Nation and to the Aurora community.

Colonel Dexter has been an outstanding leader during her tenure at Buckley Space Force Base. Under her command, Buckley has made numerous advancements in space operations, infrastructure improvements, and community partnerships. Her dedication to the men and women of Space Base Delta 2 is evident in every action she takes on their behalf.

During her time at Buckley, Colonel Dexter has worked to bolster the morale and well-being of the personnel under her charge. Her commitment to creating a supportive environment does not go unnoticed and has contributed to the readiness and effectiveness of the base.

Colonel Dexter has also been a remarkable advocate for the base within the local community, strengthening ties and ensuring Buckley's integral role in our region. Her engagement with local leaders and citizens has fostered mutual understanding and support.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 6th Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to Colonel Heidi Dexter for her distinguished service and wish her the very best at her next duty station. Her leadership has been instrumental to Buckley's operations and her contributions to our Nation and community will have a lasting impact.

REMEMBERING KARANJA AJANAKU

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a heartfelt tribute to Karanja Ajanaku, a respected reporter and editor in Memphis, who passed on Tuesday at the age of 70. A native of Natchitoches, Louisiana, who was raised in Kansas City, Dr. Ajanaku came to Memphis in 1977 right after graduating from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Journalism as Leroy Williams Jr. He started at The Commercial Appeal as a beat reporter and was the first Black reporter to cover City Hall for the newspaper. He later became the paper's night news editor and a deputy Metro Desk editor for over 26 years. I first met Karanja, then Leroy, when he covered the general assembly while I served as his state senator. We became friends and visited often and, in the pressroom and in legislative plaza, that friendship continued for the rest of his life. I had and have nothing but the highest respect for his acumen and values. He was a first class reporter and a first class human being. In 1986, he had his name legally changed to Karanja Aidoo Ajanaku, reflecting his cultural sense of self as an agent of change, and was thereafter recognized by his colorful African dashikis. He said his adopted name meant "the guide who puts things in place." He joined The Tri-State Defender newspaper, focusing on the African American community, in 2007, and rose to be its Executive Editor before retiring in 2023. A mentor to many in those newsrooms, Dr. Ajanaku was known for his grace, compassion, patience and dedication to accuracy. The Tri-State Defender, in a statement mourning his loss, said "He was committed to elevating the African American voice in this community

through his exceptional journalism and incredible eye for a great photo.” In addition to all of that, he was a genuinely nice guy. In a 2018 profile story in *Memphis Magazine*, Dr. Ajanaku expressed concern about the decline in newspaper reading and its impact on the quality of our democracy, “We’ve got people who are growing up that can’t read. And many who can, can’t read in context. They can’t comprehend stuff. If you’re going to live in a democratic republic, you’re going to live where the individual has to be informed, and if he doesn’t have the tools to take in the information and make informed decisions, you’ve got a problem. It’s a greater threat than Russia.” I express my condolences to his twin children, daughter Jamila Ajanaku, of Phoenix, Arizona, and son Karanja Ajanaku, Jr., of Nashville; a sister, Jacqueline Broadus of Reno, Nevada; two brothers, Randy Williams of Kansas City, Missouri, and Ronald Williams of Leavenworth, Kansas; and his six grandchildren; his former newsroom colleagues, his admirers and his many friends. His was a life well-lived. As Dr. Ajanaku himself said so often: The journey continues.

**RECOGNIZING THE CRUCIAL WORK
OF THE HIGH INTENSITY DRUG
TRAFFICKING AREA PROGRAM**

HON. SHARICE DAVIDS

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the crucial work of the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program, also known as HIDTA.

Far too many Americans have been tragically impacted by our nation’s opioid epidemic. Thankfully, there is hope. Overdose deaths dropped by 24 percent from September 2023 to September 2024, and while that’s something to celebrate, we have a long way to go.

The 33 regional HDTAs across the country are comprised of federal, state, and local partners, resulting in robust interagency coordination to respond to the most serious drug threats to the region. However, recent proposals to cut HIDTA funding by more than 30 percent, and even to remove the program from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, threaten the effectiveness of HIDTA.

Without full funding, regional HDTAs will lack the resources needed to maintain this high level of coordination. That’s why I recently joined with my colleagues in urging House Appropriations Committee leadership to ensure that the HIDTA program receives the full funding and structural support needed to protect our communities.

Additionally, HIDTA’s placement in the Office of National Drug Control Policy, positioned within the Executive Office, ensures policy neutrality, cross-agency alignment, and a whole-of-government approach that is essential to countering complex drug trafficking networks.

When it comes to HIDTA’s great work, I speak with some experience. For years, I have held fentanyl roundtables that bring together educators, law enforcement, teenagers, health professionals, and more. At every single one of these roundtables, Midwest HIDTA

Executive Director Dan Neill has sat and listened to the tragic stories of loss and the challenges faced by our communities.

Having spent a career in drug and law enforcement, Mr. Neill connects with my constituents in the Kansas Third District, and all of those in his six-state region, to ensure that the Midwest HIDTA provides the top-notch coordination and leadership that is fighting the fentanyl epidemic and has led to a reduction in overdose deaths. But just as HIDTA has supported us, we must support HIDTA.

If we want to continue building on the progress we’ve made and continue saving lives, we must resist calls to reposition HIDTA or cut its funding. I am grateful for the heroic work of HIDTA and the program’s proven impact. I urge my colleagues in Congress to provide full support for this worthy and lifesaving program.

**RECOGNIZING UNITED STATES MARINE
SGT RICHARD LOUGHRAN
AS JULY 2025 VETERAN OF THE
MONTH**

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with profound respect and gratitude to recognize the extraordinary service and unwavering dedication of Sgt. Richard Loughran, a proud veteran of the United States Marine Corps and our distinguished Veteran of the Month for July 2025 from Michigan’s 9th Congressional District. His exceptional military career and steadfast commitment to duty, excellence, and patriotism embody the very best of American service.

Richard Loughran answered the call to serve his country at the young age of 17—with his father’s permission—when he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. He graduated from the Detroit Institute of Technology in 1942 and enlisted in 1943. He began basic training and soon after completed training as a Private First Class, demonstrating his strong performance upon graduation. Richard continued to demonstrate his strong performance and high skill set when he was recruited to the Communication Intelligence Group as a Japanese Code Interpreter in the Pacific Theater during World War II.

Over his three years of service, Richard was on the battlefields of Tinian, Saipan, Guam, and Okinawa. During these years, Richard also took part in the Wind Talkers Initiative. This initiative involved the use of the Native American language of Navajo by the U.S. military to create coded messages the Japanese couldn’t decipher. Being a part of this initiative highlights Richard’s high aptitude in languages and his deep dedication to serving our country.

Richard was also a part of the radio deception that led to the 1942 Battle of Midway. In this operation, codebreakers successfully deciphered Japanese naval codes and intercepted messages detailing an attack, which was later confirmed to be targeting Midway. Richard’s group also contributed to the Buckner Bay capture of a German Enigma Code Machine. Being involved in such critical turning points in United States history is a testament to Richard’s intelligence, bravery, and impact.

After his service, Richard earned an Associate’s Degree in Engineering from Valparaiso Institute, using that knowledge to become a manufacturer’s representative. In 1961, he launched his own business—Data Electronics—which grew across five states and demonstrated his entrepreneurial drive and success in the field.

In the years that followed, Richard pursued a wide range of interests, from photography to the art of stage makeup. He even revitalized a struggling makeup studio in Chicago, turning it into a thriving business. More recently, he continued his service to others through volunteering for the Marine Corps. Richard helped run the Toys for Tots program in Illinois and served as an ombudsman for local nursing homes. His dedication earned him the title of Volunteer of the Year, further demonstrating his compassion and commitment to community.

Richard is also a frequent guest speaker at local elementary and middle schools, where he shares his World War II experiences with younger generations, ensuring that the legacy of service and sacrifice lives on.

Above all, Richard is a loving husband and devoted father. Together with his wife, he raised three children. He recently celebrated his 100th birthday, surrounded by over fifty family members including seventeen great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren, a remarkable milestone befitting a remarkable man.

Mr. Speaker, let us express our sincerest appreciation to Richard Loughran for his outstanding military service and for his excellent acts of valor that have protected our country and our freedoms in our great nation. His story is a testament to the American spirit of service, sacrifice, and resolve, and it is an honor to recognize him as our Veteran of the Month.

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF
COLDWATER HIGH SCHOOL’S
GIRLS TRACK AND FIELD TEAM
FOR WINNING THE DIVISION III
STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE**

HON. ROBERT E. LATTI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTI. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school track and field team in Ohio’s Fifth Congressional District. The young women of the Coldwater High School Girls Track and Field Team have represented their school ably on their way to achieving the Division III State Track and Field Title. The team overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in their effort to surpass all other teams at the 2025 OHSA Division III State Track and Field Championships.

In pursuing the State Championship, the Cavaliers defeated their outstanding competitors to win with an impressive 65.5 points. The members of this very special team have shown that their sport requires an individual effort for a team result. Their hard work and dedication, both on and off the track, in achieving this accomplishment should be commended.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Coldwater High School Girls Track and Field Team. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BLUE PACIFIC ACT

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my Boosting Long-Term U.S. Engagement in the Pacific (BLUE Pacific) Act, co-sponsored by 14 of my colleagues.

Scattered across the three traditional Pacific subregions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia are over two dozen jurisdictions collectively known as the Pacific Islands, including twelve independent states, countries in free association and territories. Though small in land area and population, the land plus maritime exclusive economic zones of all these jurisdictions combined exceed the land areas of China and Russia combined, comprising a significant part of the vast Pacific Ocean and our Earth's surface.

In 2019, a number of us came together to create the Congressional Pacific Islands Caucus, the first such group of Members of Congress dedicated to this dynamic and diverse part of the world. We believe that the Pacific Islands region remains critical to our national security interests in the Indo-Pacific which advises greater U.S. engagement with this region to advance our shared interests and values, particularly in the context of growing geopolitical competition and threats by our shared adversaries to endanger the pursuit of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Over the last three Congresses, we have introduced versions of the BLUE Pacific Act, which would advance a comprehensive, long-term U.S. strategy in the Pacific Islands region. Much of the previous versions of the BLUE Pacific Act has been enacted or implemented as a result of our efforts in previous Congresses, but key provisions remain and are included in this version, in addition to provisions from other bipartisan U.S.-Pacific Islands bills introduced in the 118th Congress, including the Pacific Partnership Act and the Engage the Pacific Act. It also adds provisions that incorporate various developments in the Pacific Islands over the last few years, including goals and needs articulated by the Pacific Islands themselves that are in line with U.S. interests.

The current version of the BLUE Pacific Act expands U.S. diplomatic and development presence in the Pacific Islands by recommending that the administration increase the number of staff working on Pacific Islands issues and in the region, authorizing the Secretaries of State and Commerce to hire locally employed staff in the region, establishing a workforce development program, codifying a media program and more.

It increases U.S. security assistance to address regional maritime security, transnational crime and law enforcement issues by authorizing the Secretary of State to provide assistance to build the capacity of civilian and national security institutions in the region and ex-

panding existing reports on transnational crime on the Pacific Islands.

The bill deepens bilateral and multilateral trade between the U.S. and the Pacific Islands by authorizing a trade capacity building initiative, authorizing the U.S. Trade Representative to work to expand and diversify trade and directing the Secretary of Commerce to allocate additionally Foreign Commercial Service Officers to the region.

Further, the BLUE Pacific Act supports regional economic and social development by providing assistance in multiple sectors such as public health, education, infrastructure, environmental resilience, digital connectivity, disaster mitigation and more.

Finally, the bill promotes shared values like freedom of the press, gender equality and freedom of religion, including by establishing an interagency committee on engagement with civil society organizations in the Pacific Islands and authorizing the President to provide assistance to promote freedom of the press.

These initiatives support the significant strides we have made in recent years towards fully reengaging the Pacific Islands region across a range of common values and interests and in response to specific Pacific Islands' needs. The United States must make clear to the region that we are a partner they can trust and rely upon in the long term.

For these reasons, I ask that you support our bill. Mahalo.

RECOGNIZING DANIEL RUBIN AND HIS SERVICE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Daniel Rubin for his outstanding service to the House of Representatives, to the House Judiciary Committee, and to the constituents of New York's 12th Congressional District.

Daniel Rubin is an exceptional talent, with years of experience working at the highest levels of Congress on the most crucial legal issues of the day. He has a razorsharp mind, an inquisitive nature, and a unique ability to accurately identify the key question that must be addressed in any given situation.

Daniel Rubin has worked directly on the Judiciary Committee and the Ways and Means Committee and has worked with Members who served on the Budget, Oversight, and Education and the Workforce committees. It is truly rare to find someone with his breadth and depth of experience working in the House for as long as Daniel has. That is a testament to his commitment to public service and his ability to gain the trust of multiple Members of Congress from diverse backgrounds.

Not all positions on the Hill are equal, and Daniel has had perhaps the toughest assignment. He routinely handles the most challenges questions put to lawmakers by the Capitol Hill press corps. They are trained to find vulnerabilities in any argument and expose them to the public. They are tenacious and intelligent, and Daniel does an excellent job working with them every day to get them the information they seek and to do so in a way that is most beneficial to the Members

and Committees he is working for. It is not an easy task, but Daniel does it with exceptional skill.

While working with us he has maintained excellent relationships across a broad spectrum of writers, editors, and producers. He reads voraciously and is always well informed and well prepared for the challenges presented by his work. He is an excellent writer and a master communicator.

I enjoyed working closely with Daniel on the House Judiciary Committee and in my personal office for the past several years. Together we worked with dozens of Members of Congress to help shape our strategy, messaging, and legal approach in countless hearings and markups. We identified the most powerful messages and amplified them in the press and on social media.

Daniel built the greatest social media operation of any Committee on Capitol Hill—training and supervising staff that were nimble, provocative, and engaging. Under his supervision the number of subscribers and their level of engagement with our content far outpaced the traditional House committee.

Daniel has been at the epicenter of all of our crisis communications, tackling difficult questions with a level head, and providing excellent advice. My senior management team and I have always trusted Daniel's judgment and strategic thinking. While working separately on my campaign, Daniel helped propel me to a 30-point victory over a fellow Democratic Committee Chair in a tough New York primary. He was essential in debate preparation and worked with me to anticipate questions and ensure that I was ready to respond in the most powerful way possible. He led the communications team during the primary and helped me secure the New York Times endorsement.

I wish Daniel the best of luck as he continues to fight for the rights and liberties of all people and I thank him for his service.

HONORING THE LIVERMORE STOCKMEN'S RODEO ASSOCIATION

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. SWALWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Livermore Stockmen's Rodeo Association (hereinafter the "Association") on the occasion of its well-earned induction into the ProRodeo Hall of Fame, in Colorado Springs, Colorado, this Saturday, July 12, 2025.

The Livermore Rodeo has been a valued part of California's Tri-Valley community for over a century. Founded in response to a national call for help during World War I, the Livermore Rodeo began as a local fundraiser and effort to support the American Red Cross and wounded soldiers overseas. The first event, held at James Anderson Ranch, raised over \$1,200.00, an extraordinary sum for the time. Its success caught national attention after being filmed by Universal Studios and displayed in theatres across the country, turning a community fundraiser into a cherished annual tradition.

The event earned the nickname, "The World's Fastest Rodeo," and since moving to Robertson Park in 1967, it has continued to

grow and attract thousands of spectators each year for top-level competition. Its years of operation, led by the Association, have brought a great deal of pride and belonging to the Tri-Valley. The Association stays true to its local roots, supporting not only the rodeo itself, but also the broader community. Today, the event includes charities such as "Tough Enough to Wear Pink," in support of breast cancer awareness, and "Patriot Day", in honor of military service. Accompanying events like the "Lil' Partners Rodeo" and the Rotary Club parade make rodeo weekend an annual regional highlight.

This year, the Association celebrates its 107th year with its most distinguished honor yet, joining a select group of inductees to the ProRodeo Hall of Fame, recognizing its long-standing contributions to the sport. The ProRodeo Hall of Fame is the only museum in the world dedicated exclusively to professional rodeo and its legacy. This honor reflects the work of many volunteers, fans, directors, and community members who have kept the tradition alive for over 100 years.

Congratulations to the Association, the rodeo competitors and participants, and all the fans that have enjoyed the shows and made the Livermore Rodeo the success that it has become.

CELEBRATING GENE AND MARLENE EPSTEIN'S 65 YEARS OF MARRIAGE

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Gene and Marlene Epstein as they celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary. This remarkable milestone honors 65 years of steadfast love and enduring partnership. It is my privilege to commemorate their everlasting bond on this special day.

Gene and Marlene are high school sweethearts who once lived just three blocks apart in Philadelphia. In celebration of Gene's success in car sales, the couple often ate at The Hot Shot Diner, and soon thereafter, they got engaged on the Atlantic City boardwalk. They married in 1960 and went on to raise two children, Ellen and Robert.

What truly sets their story apart is that their relationship extends beyond their deep love for one another. As philanthropists and co-directors of the Gene & Marlene Epstein Humanitarian Fund, the couple has devoted themselves to serving others and caring for the people in our community.

To exemplify this, when asked by a local Newtown newspaper about a personal goal, Gene answered, "I want to do the best I can to make things better for everyone I can."

His statement perfectly summarizes their 65 years of partnership: one filled with commitment not only to each other but also to the betterment of the entire community. Gene and Marlene's selfless dedication has marked countless lives, making their 65 years together a powerful expression of love in action.

United in their mission to care for others, the Epsteins have funded scholarships at Bucks County Community College for Lower

Bucks students; handed out \$100 bills during the COVID-19 pandemic to those in need; and established Wheelz2Work, a program that donates vehicles to low-income families.

Their philanthropic reach extends beyond Bucks County. The Epsteins have supported a Los Angeles food bank, an organ transplant program in Pittsburgh, and emergency services for drug overdoses in Philadelphia.

Ultimately, Gene and Marlene's relationship is one defined by love and service. Their 65 years together have made our community stronger, healthier, and happier. I am in awe of Gene and Marlene's endless love and giving spirits. It is an absolute honor to celebrate their 65th anniversary today. I thank them for all they have done, and continue to do, for our community.

RECOGNIZING TIMOTHY TEMPLETON FOR HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE WITH THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

MR. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Timothy Templeton, who dedicated his time to contribute to the safety and security of our nation through his service in the United States Marine Corps. It is an honor to have an individual that embodies strength, courage and commitment in Missouri's Fifth Congressional District.

Born and raised in Missouri, Corporal Templeton enlisted in the United States Marine Corps after graduating from North Platte High School in Dearborn, Missouri, in 1982. Upon joining, he became a Small Missile Systems Electronics Repair Technician (MOS 2875) and was stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, with the 2nd Force Service Support Group, Electronics Maintenance Company, Calibrations Platoon to provide maintenance for TOW2 and Dragon anti-tank missile systems.

During his time at Camp Lejeune, he was temporarily assigned to the 26th Marine Amphibious Unit Service Support Group which deployed with Amphibious Squadron 6 as part of Marine Amphibious Readiness Group 1-86 to the Mediterranean Sea. During this deployment, he was the TOW Subject Matter Expert and was also selected to ship's platoon for the USS *El Paso* (LKA-117) to coordinate embarkation/debarkation of Marines and equipment. His unit was awarded the Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation for this deployment.

During his service, Corporal Templeton's unit participated in Operation Eldorado Canyon off the coast of Libya in the spring of 1986. His unit was awarded the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal for their contribution to the operation. It is evident that Templeton's leadership allowed his team to move with direction, motivation, and the ability to go far and beyond the standard, receiving recognition as a testament.

Corporal Templeton was released from the Marine Corps active duty in 1987, serving in the ready reserves and earning an Honorable Discharge in 1989. His willingness to put his life on the line and endure the hardships that come with military service has not gone unno-

ticed. As a thank you for his sacrifice, bravery and example set, it is my honor to present Corporal Templeton with the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal as well as the Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation ribbon he earned while serving our country. Corporal Templeton served the Marine Corps with a source of immense pride, leading an often-distinguished team and his service deserves to be honored. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Timothy Templeton and thank him for his service.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF NATHAN BRIGHT FOR WINNING THE DIVISION I STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE FOR HIGH JUMP

HON. ROBERT E. LATTI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTI. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school athlete from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Nathan Bright, a senior at North Ridgeville High School, has represented his school ably on his way to achieving the Division I State Title for High Jump at the State Track and Field Meet. Nathan overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in his effort to win the title.

In pursuing the State Championship, Nathan defeated his opponents with an impressive jump of 6 feet 9 inches. His hard work and dedication, both on and off the field, in achieving this accomplishment is truly outstanding. He has achieved an impressive season, bringing pride to his school and community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Nathan Bright of North Ridgeville High School. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF MRS. FREIDA B. DORITY

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to mourn the loss and celebrate the life of a friend and a great American: Mrs. Freida B. Dority of Alabama. She passed away on June 28 at age 73. I came to know her over the years on the Faith and Politics Institute's Congressional Civil Rights Pilgrimages to Alabama. Mrs. Freida served as Director of Culinary Experiences for the Faith and Politics Tour Luncheon, playing a leading role hosting Members of Congress and other distinguished guests as we came to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma and pay tribute to the civil rights heroes who helped build a more perfect Union.

The bible tells us: Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms, 1 Peter 4:9-10. Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Freida offered her hospitality cheerfully, eagerly, and enthusiastically. She had many gifts, including a lifelong aptitude for

cooking. The hearty fare that came out of her kitchen nourished not only the body but the soul. She put together meals infused with joy, love, and comfort. It was impossible to partake without feeling kinship and community with those around you. The Members who attended the pilgrimages came from across the country and the political spectrum. Mrs. Freida helped bring them closer together, not only with her food but with her warm, generous spirit. So too did the rest of the team at First Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, including Benjamin and Annie Beasley and Reverend E.B. Morris.

Some of my most cherished memories are walking across the Edmund Pettus Bridge arm-in-arm with my dear friend and brother, John Lewis, on numerous pilgrimages over the years. Those memories are incomplete, however, without recalling the stories, laughs, and prayers he and I shared at the dinners Mrs. Freida helped prepare.

Indeed, Mrs. Freida lived a life of service. As an Army & Air Force Exchange Services Manager at Maxwell Air Force Base for nearly two decades, she helped lift up countless servicemembers and military families. From singing in the First Baptist Church's Choir to overseeing its Meals on Wheels program, Mrs. Freida was also a leader in her church and her community.

No one was more familiar with Mrs. Freida's, beautiful soul than her family. She was a loving wife of 52 years to her husband, Chief Master Sergeant Jackie T.L. Dority. She lovingly raised her daughter, Alisha; adopted son, Eric; and numerous foster children over the years. She was a nurturing force in the lives of so many, including her siblings, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and many godsons and goddaughters. My prayers are with her family and with everyone whose life was blessed by her generosity.

Mr. Speaker, until her very last breath, Mrs. Freida B. Dority was, as the verse said: a faithful steward of God's grace. May her memory not only be a blessing but a calling for all of us to act as faithful stewards of that grace as well. I ask that all my colleagues join me in praying for her and giving thanks for her life of service.

HONORING MS. LIZ MARTIN

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Liz Martin on her retirement as President of the VCU Health Tappahannock Hospital. She wrapped up her time in June after an esteemed thirty-six-year career in healthcare.

Ms. Martin's commitment to improving the lives of countless physicians, nurses, and patients throughout her career is what sets her apart. She has served as President of the Tappahannock Hospital for the past twenty years, overseeing the hospital's transition from the Riverside Health System to VCU Health. Ms. Martin's guidance and vision enabled the Tappahannock Hospital to enter a new age of health services while maintaining exceptionally high standards of care.

During her time as President of the hospital, Ms. Martin invaluable aided in the develop-

ment of the Dr. Jeffery Haskins Scholarship Fund for healthcare professionals committed to serving the Tappahannock area during their career. She also was instrumental in the creation of the Jeri Sibley VCU Health Tappahannock Cancer Care Fund, which helps to provide wellness and beauty services to cancer patients. She also briefly served in a leadership role for the Riverside Walter Reed Hospital in Gloucester.

Beyond her calling as a healthcare leader, Ms. Martin remains a crucial leading light in her community, where she serves on the board of the Ledwith-Lewis Free Clinic and the Essex County Chamber of Commerce. Previously, she has also chaired the Essex County School Board and the Board of Aylett Country Day School. Throughout all her many roles, her colleagues have continued to recognize Ms. Martin as an uncompromising leader, visionary, and public servant.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Ms. Liz Martin for her years of tireless dedication to our healthcare system and community. I wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement, and pray for her success in whatever adventures come her way.

REMEMBERING JOHN C. HARRIS

HON. VINCE FONG

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of John C. Harris, a visionary agriculturalist, respected horseman, successful businessman, and generous philanthropist, who passed away on July 2, 2025, at the age of 81.

A lifelong resident of Fresno County, Mr. Harris was born into a farming family and embodied the spirit of the San Joaquin Valley. After graduating from the University of California, Davis, in 1965 and serving his country as a U.S. Army officer, Mr. Harris returned to the Central Valley to carry on and expand his family's agricultural legacy. As the driving force behind Harris Farms, he transformed the business into one of California's most prominent agricultural operations. Under his leadership, Harris Ranch Beef Company became a nationally respected name in food production, known for quality and innovation.

Mr. Harris was equally influential in the world of thoroughbred horse racing. Over five decades, he bred and raced champions, including California Chrome, the winner of the 2014 Kentucky Derby and the 2014 Preakness Stakes. As chairman of the California Horse Racing Board and a board member of the Jockey Club and the Breeders' Cup, he was a pillar of integrity and advocacy in the sport. His green-and-white silks became a fixture in California's winner's circles, and his leadership helped shape the industry for future generations.

Beyond his impact as a businessman and sportsman, John Harris was a servant of his community. He supported educational institutions throughout the Central Valley such as Fresno State, UC Davis, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and Saint Agnes Medical Center. His philanthropic work spanned education, healthcare, and vocational training, including supporting a program at Pleasant Valley State Prison that pairs inmates with horses.

Over the years, Mr. Harris was honored with numerous accolades, including the Livestock Man of the Year Award, the Leon S. Peters Award, and induction into the Fresno Athletic Hall of Fame. However, he was known not only for his accomplishments, but for his humility and his steadfast dedication to his home. He believed deeply in investing in people, mentoring young agricultural leaders, and uplifting those around him through quiet acts of kindness. He is survived by his beloved wife, Cookie.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in remembering John C. Harris—a pioneer whose legacy will continue to shape California agriculture, equine sport, and civic life for generations to come.

RECOGNIZING THEODORE M. RENZ

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Theodore M. Renz, who is retiring after nearly four decades of exceptional public service as the Executive Director of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District (BID) in Ridgewood, Queens. Throughout his distinguished career, Mr. Renz has exemplified an unwavering commitment to community development, small business, and neighborhood revitalization, laying a strong foundation for a more vibrant community for future generations.

Since the Myrtle Avenue BID's establishment in 1988, Mr. Renz has been at the helm, guiding it through transformative growth. Recognizing the vital role that small businesses play in New York City's economy, Mr. Renz has worked tirelessly to ensure that the BID serves as an accessible and indispensable resource for local entrepreneurs. Under his leadership, the BID supports more than 300 businesses along a mile-long stretch of Myrtle Avenue, providing essential services including sanitation, public safety, beautification, and marketing that fosters a robust and welcoming commercial corridor.

Mr. Renz's tenure is marked by numerous accomplishments. He spearheaded major urban improvement projects, including a \$2.4 million streetscape enhancement for Myrtle Avenue and played a pivotal role in helping secure a \$55 million upgrade of the Myrtle-Wyckoff transit hub, enhancing accessibility for thousands of daily commuters and consumers. As an advocate for open space, he successfully championed the conversion of underutilized spaces into public plazas for the community. Today, the BID corridor is home to four new public plazas enjoyed by all.

As a lifetime resident of Ridgewood, Mr. Renz public service extends beyond the BID. He has served as Executive Director of the Ridgewood Local Development Corporation (RLDC) and as a member of Queens Community Board 5, consistently advocating for small businesses, public safety, and quality-of-life improvements. His collaboration with city agencies, elected officials, and local stakeholders has left a lasting impact on the Ridgewood community.

As Mr. Renz embarks on a well-earned retirement after 37 years of dedicated public

service, I extend my deepest gratitude for his leadership, and unwavering commitment to strengthening the economic fabric of New York City. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Theodore M. Renz for his outstanding contributions and wishing him good health and joy in this next chapter of life.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF RANIA BROWN FOR WINNING THE DIVISION I STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE FOR THE DISCUS THROW

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school athlete from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Rania Brown, a senior at Avon High School, has represented her school ably on her way to achieving the Division I State Title for the Discus Throw at the State Track and Field Meet. Rania overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in her effort to win the title.

In pursuing the State Championship, Rania defeated her opponents with an impressive throw of 153 feet 4 inches. Her hard work and dedication, both on and off the field, in achieving this accomplishment is truly outstanding. She has achieved an impressive season, bringing pride to her school and community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Rania Brown of Avon High School. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF LAKES REGION COMMUNITY SERVICES

HON. CHRIS PAPPAS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Lakes Region Community Services, a non-profit centered around meeting critical needs in New Hampshire.

For more than 50 years, Lakes Region Community Services (LRCS) has been a pillar for providing crucial services in New Hampshire. Through a number of initiatives, LRCS has acted as a lifeline for so many people throughout New Hampshire. Whether through its Family Resource Center, Sober Parenting Journey, or Home Assist programs, thousands of Granite Staters are helped each year through this essential work.

These programs assist people with developmental disabilities, acquired brain disorders, chronic illnesses, families with children, and our aging population. Community service organizations like LRCS play a vital role in creating a positive environment where people can grow and thrive in any stage of life. Covering 24 towns, LRCS has been a support system where people from across our communities can come and get the resources they need. I

commend LRCS and its more than 300 employees for the important work they do every day to positively impact people's lives.

On behalf of my constituents in New Hampshire's First Congressional District, I want to say thank you and congratulate LRCS on 50 years of dedicated service to our state. We are grateful for your commitment to our community, and I look forward to continuing to support this life-changing work.

CELEBRATING ROY DRINKARD'S 105TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a special event that is occurring to celebrate and honor an extraordinary American and a dear personal friend: Mr. Roy Drinkard of Cullman, Alabama.

This event is scheduled to occur on Friday, July 11, 2025. This will be an event to celebrate Mr. Drinkard's 105th birthday as he personally plans to welcome family, friends, and acquaintances to his home in Cullman, Alabama.

Born July 12, 1920, Mr. Drinkard is the oldest living United States Marine in the Nation, a proud veteran of World War II who served his country with courage and who continues to inspire all who know him.

My wife, Caroline, and I plan to attend this momentous occasion and celebrate with Roy and all those in attendance.

Mr. Drinkard remains actively engaged in his business and continues to serve on the Board of Trustees of Troy University, demonstrating that age is no barrier to leadership, commitment, or purpose.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and all of our colleagues pause for a moment in celebration on Friday as we celebrate the man and the life of Roy Drinkard and wish him a very happy 105th birthday.

HONORING THE LIFE OF COLONEL CARLYLE "SMITTY" HARRIS

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life and legacy of Colonel Carlyle "Smitty" Harris, a true American hero. Colonel Harris, a retired United States Air Force officer, was 36 years old when his aircraft was shot down over North Vietnam on April 4, 1965. He became the sixth American taken as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam.

Colonel Harris served this Nation with unwavering courage and strength. Following his capture, he endured more than eight years of brutal conditions, including torture and starvation. Yet, he never yielded to his captors. Instead, he put his military training into action, using the Tap Code to communicate with fellow prisoners and maintain unity, morale, and resistance.

After returning home, Colonel Harris continued his service, leading and mentoring fellow

airmen until his retirement from the Air Force in 1979. His devotion to our Nation didn't end with his military career—he remained deeply involved in his community, lending his time and voice to numerous charitable and veteran-focused causes.

In recognition of his service, I was honored to introduce H.R. 208, legislation that was signed into law by President Joe Biden in 2021, designating the United States Post Office in Tupelo, Mississippi, as the "Colonel Carlyle 'Smitty' Harris Post Office." That designation serves as a permanent tribute to a man who embodied the best of America.

Colonel Harris passed away in hospice care on July 6, 2025, at the age of 96. Today, we remember his extraordinary service, enduring sacrifice, and lifelong commitment to his country and community.

He is survived by his wife, Louise; their three children; grandchildren; and great-grandchildren.

May his legacy of honor, resilience, and patriotism continue to inspire generations of Americans.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOX METRO WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Fox Metro Water Reclamation District as they celebrate their 100th anniversary, marking a century of wastewater management and environmental stewardship.

Founded in 1925 in Aurora, Illinois as the Aurora Sanitary District, this institution was established to protect public health and preserve the natural beauty of the Fox River from disease and pollution.

By 1929, this vision became a reality with the construction of a wastewater treatment plant and supporting infrastructure. Over the past century, Fox Metro WRD has been a model of sustainability, fiscal responsibility, and environmental stewardship. The Fox Metro WRD has continually invested in innovation from solar power and nutrient reduction to recycling biosolids, restoring native landscapes, reusing treated effluent, and recovering methane gas for campus and public use.

Fox Metro WRD now serves over 304,000 people across 90 square miles, operating twelve pump stations and more than 100 miles of intersecting sanitary sewers. They manage an 150-acre treatment facility where an average of 36 million gallons of wastewater is treated daily, ensuring the health and environmental protection of the Fox Valley region.

For 100 years, the dedicated public servants of Fox Metro WRD have safeguarded public health, supported local economies, and helped eradicate deadly diseases.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor the Fox Metro Water Reclamation District's century of service, and I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating their remarkable contributions and continued commitment to protecting public health and our environment. I commend their vital contributions and congratulate them on a century of service to our communities.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF OWEN SCOTT FOR WINNING THE DIVISION II STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE FOR THE 1600 METER RUN

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school athlete from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Owen Scott, a senior at Van Wert High School, has represented his school ably on his way to achieving the Division II State Title for the 1600 Meter Run at the State Track and Field Meet. Owen overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in his effort to win the title.

In pursuing the State Championship, Owen defeated his opponents with an impressive time of 4:10.19. His hard work and dedication, both on and off the track, in achieving this accomplishment is truly outstanding. He has achieved an impressive season, bringing pride to his school and community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Owen Scott of Van Wert High School. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

HONORING THE BRAVERY OF THE U.S. COAST GUARD

HON. MICHAEL CLOUD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. CLOUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary bravery and service demonstrated in response to the devastating flooding across Central Texas.

Over the past several days, catastrophic flooding along the Guadalupe and Colorado Rivers has shaken communities across the Texas Hill Country. Lives have been lost, others are still missing, and boots remain on the ground—searching, rescuing, and doing everything possible to bring families back together.

On July 4, 2025, as the floodwaters surged near Hunt, Texas, the United States Coast Guard launched a rescue crew out of Air Station Corpus Christi at 5:30 a.m. Despite severe weather and three aborted attempts, the crew aboard an MH-65 Dolphin helicopter pushed through.

That crew—Aircraft Commander Lieutenant Ian Hopper, Co-Pilot Lieutenant Blair Oguliofor, Flight Mechanic Petty Officer Seth Reeves, and Rescue Swimmer Petty Officer Scott Ruskan—is a team of American heroes who carried out one of the most consequential rescue operations this country has ever seen.

Petty Officer Ruskan was lowered into the flood zone and coordinated rescues for more than three hours, working with state, local, and military partners across three landing zones. In his first rescue mission, he helped save 165 lives—15 of whom were airlifted directly by the Coast Guard crew.

This mission was one part of a larger operation, powered by 54 Coast Guard personnel

rotating day and night to keep rescue efforts moving across the region. Every hour, lives are being saved by men and women who step into harm's way so others can make it home. In the face of tragedy, we're reminded of what makes this country strong: selflessness, courage, and Americans willing to step into danger to protect others.

Texans are known for their resilience, but no one overcomes disaster alone. I thank every Coast Guardsman, first responder, and local official who acted swiftly and selflessly to help their neighbors.

May God strengthen those still searching, comfort those who mourn, and bless the brave men and women who ran toward the rising waters.

God bless Texas, and God bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE REMARKABLE CAREER OF CRAIG DELLIMORE

HON. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the remarkable career of Craig Dellimore and to congratulate him on his upcoming retirement from WBBM Radio in Chicago.

Craig has been a pillar of Chicago journalism for more than four decades. After studying journalism at Columbia University, he began his career covering Washington politics for the Associated Press before joining WBBM Radio in 1983.

For 40 years, Craig has exemplified the highest standards of fairness and professionalism in political reporting. As the host of the weekly "At Issue" radio show and Political Editor of WBBM News radio, Craig has covered every aspect of Chicago and national politics. Whether interviewing elected officials or unpacking complex topics like homelessness, mental health, and gun violence, Craig brings compassion, clarity and an unwavering commitment to the truth. His dedication to integrity earned him the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Lisagor Awards, recognition from the Illinois Associated Press, and widespread respect across the state.

Beyond the newsroom, Craig served his colleagues through leadership in the Chicago chapter of SAG-AFTRA, as both President and Vice President.

From the halls of Congress to Chicago's City Hall, Craig has been a trusted voice guiding listeners through a turbulent political landscape with clarity and insight.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to congratulate Craig Dellimore on his retirement and to thank him for his outstanding service to journalism and to the people of Illinois.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF ROBERT L. "BOB" HANLEY

HON. PETE STAUBER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Seaman Second

Class Robert L. "Bob" Hanley, the last living survivor of the USS *Houston*, a member of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet sunk by the Imperial Japanese Navy in March 1942. Seaman Hanley showcased American grit, tenacity, and commitment in the fight against tyranny.

As one of only 368 crewmen out of 1,060 to survive the sinking of the USS *Houston*, Bob Hanley faced unimaginable hardships as a prisoner of war for four years. He endured the brutal Bataan Death March, where 64 men from Company D of the 194th Tank Regiment came from my district. Only 34 survived. He was transported on "hell ships" to Singapore and Burma, and he labored on the infamous Thai-Burma Death Railway under conditions of starvation, torture, and beatings, without access to medicines or supplies. Battling dysentery, malaria, and pellagra, Bob's resilience never wavered. At liberation in August 1945, he was among just 291 remaining survivors from the USS *Houston*.

Bob's service did not end with his Navy enlistment, which ended in 1947 after six years. He continued serving his country by enlisting in the U.S. Army for 15 years. After his military career, he worked in security at 3M for another 15 years, retiring in 1978 due to medical reasons.

Throughout his life, Bob's deep faith as a devout member of the Catholic Church of Saint Peter in Forest Lake, Minnesota, guided him through the darkest times and brightest moments, serving as a cornerstone of his strength. On September 12, 2024, Seaman Second Class Robert L. Hanley passed away at 102 years old. May he rest in peace.

RECOGNIZING ALAN BLEAM'S 40 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH PLUMSTEAD TOWNSHIP

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding constituent from my district, Mr. Alan Bleam. This year, Alan celebrates his 40th year with Plumstead Township. It is my distinct honor to commend him for four decades of resolute service to our community.

A lifelong resident of Plumstead Township, Alan truly embodies the spirit of Plumsteadville. From attending Gayman Elementary to Middle Bucks Area Vocational Technical School, serving as a Junior Firefighter, and achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, Alan has always demonstrated a deep commitment to public service.

In 1982, Alan became an Active Member of the Plumsteadville Volunteer Fire Company. Just three years later, he took on leadership roles both as Recording Secretary and First Lieutenant. Over the years, Alan's service with the fire company was marked by a deep sense of duty—a reflection of his strong desire to serve and protect the community he's always called home.

In 1994, Alan assumed the role of Roadmaster for Plumstead Township, eventually rising to become the Director of Public Works—a position he holds with great pride to this day. His efforts have been integral in improving the township's infrastructure and ensuring the high standard of living that residents have long depended on. In recognition

of his contributions, he was named the Plumstead Township Employee of the Year in 1998.

Yet, Alan's impact reaches far beyond his professional endeavors. He is a man rooted in community—his circle of friends from square dancing, church, the fire company, scouting, and his own neighborhood speak volumes about his caring character and connection to others. He unites the people of this community and strengthens the bonds that make living in close-knit towns so special.

In 1991, Alan married his true love, the late Desiree Blead. Together they shared 32 years of love, laughter, and devotion. Alan stood by her side through her 13-year battle with Scleroderma, providing unwavering support and care, in both his personal and professional endeavors, Alan was a committed man—committed to his family and community.

Today, I commemorate Alan Blead for his 40 years of remarkable service for our community. His steadfast dedication to the betterment of Plumstead Township continues to inspire us all.

HONORING LISA ROSE'S 42 YEARS OF BROADCAST EXCELLENCE

HON. ERIC BURLISON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lisa Rose, news anchor at Springfield, Missouri's KY3 television station, who is retiring after 42 years of broadcast excellence. KY3 covers 32 counties in southwest Missouri and northwest Arkansas.

Lisa's fascination with the news began as a 3rd grader who was devouring the daily newspaper and increased even more when she was 10 years old and witnessed televised reports about the Vietnam War. According to her, by the time she was in high school, she was truly addicted to learning as much as she could about what was going on in the world around her. So, it was no great surprise when she graduated from Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, with a Bachelors degree in TV News.

Shortly after graduation, Lisa started her career as a general assignment news reporter at KODE-TV in Joplin, Missouri. She spent four years at KODE and then moved to KY3 in 1984 as the evening news anchor. During her time at KY3, she saw TV news reporting change as advanced technology allowed for live field reporting for the first time. Portable backpacks and satellite trucks became the norm as KY3 stayed ahead of the curve in broadcast news. Now a single individual can do what used to take a satellite truck, an engineer, a photographer, and a reporter to deliver a live report. From technology to techniques in news gathering, the station has been a leader in television news and Lisa has been there every step of the way.

Lisa and her husband, Randy, have three children and three grandchildren. For more than four decades, she has been a trusted and familiar voice in our community where she's brought professionalism, warmth, and a little humor into homes all across the Ozarks. I'd like to congratulate Lisa on her retirement, and thank her for her service to the community. She will be missed.

HONORING THE CAPE VERDEAN INDEPENDENCE BIKE RIDE AND THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF CAPE VERDE'S INDEPENDENCE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Cape Verdean Independence Bike Ride as community members from across Southeastern Massachusetts and the country gather in New Bedford to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Cape Verde's independence.

This deeply meaningful and historic ride not only commemorates Cape Verde's independence from Portugal on July 5, 1975, but also celebrates the enduring strength, pride, and unity of the Cape Verdean-American community in New Bedford and beyond. The annual ride is a powerful intergenerational tradition, bringing families and neighbors together on a shared journey of remembrance, cultural pride, and collective joy.

The Cape Verdean Independence Bike Ride was established by the Cape Verdean Universal Development Association (CUDA), a grassroots organization dedicated to promoting and preserving Cape Verdean culture. Under the leadership of Carleen Cordwell, then-President of CUDA, along with support from early advocates David Andrade and Benjamin "Flip" Rose and local organizations such as "The Bomb," the ride first began as a fundraiser and community event in 1979.

Together, the group envisioned the event being more than a bike ride. They imagined a celebration of identity and resilience; an act of cultural preservation rooted in community involvement. That vision took shape with the help of the ride's dedicated founding members, including Carleen Cordwell, Diana Duarte, Jeanne Depina, Corday Faith Rivera, Buddy Andrade, Penny Santos, Susan Costa, Carol Pimental, Marilyn Halter, Liz DiCarlo, Jim Ryan, Lolly Pina, June Pina, Marie Monteiro, Debbie Santos Hudson, Jeanne Costa, Jackie Centeio, Bobby Grace, and Kenny Riberio. Their leadership and dedication laid the foundation for a tradition that continues to flourish today.

The bike route guides participants throughout New Bedford's historic West End and South End neighborhoods. These neighborhoods, with deep Cape Verdean roots, stand as testaments to the perseverance, contribu-

tions, and cultural richness of Cape Verdean-Americans. Riders of all ages choose between a 13-mile journey through the city or a three-mile route beginning at Monte's Park, named in honor of Private First-Class Joseph J. Monte, the first Cape Verdean-American to receive the Purple Heart Medal.

The annual bike ride fosters reflection on the struggles and triumphs of Cape Verdean independence, while recognizing the community's ongoing contributions to the cultural fabric of New Bedford and the nation. The ride ends at Hazelwood Park with a celebration of Cape Verdean culture, featuring traditional food, music, games, and art. From the soulful sounds of morna and lively coladeira music to the sharing of culinary traditions passed down by generations, the event is a proud expression of Cape Verdean heritage. Through movement, storytelling, and music, the Cape Verdean Independence Bike Ride preserves cultural memory, honors historical milestones, and promotes social connections across generations.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the 50th anniversary of Cape Verde's independence and commending all who have participated in and organized the Cape Verdean Independence Bike Ride for their enduring contributions to preserving cultural heritage and improving community life.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF ARIANNAH FLOYD FOR WINNING THE DIVISION II STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE FOR THE 300 METER HURDLES

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school athlete from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Ariannah Floyd, a senior at Firelands High School, has represented her school ably on her way to achieving the Division II State Title for the 300 Meter Hurdles at the State Track and Field Meet. Ariannah overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in her effort to win the title.

In pursuing the State Championship, Ariannah defeated her opponents with an impressive time of 42.76 seconds. Her hard work and dedication, both on and off the track, in achieving this accomplishment is truly outstanding. She has achieved an impressive season, bringing pride to her school and community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Ariannah Floyd of Firelands High School. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.