

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## CELEBRATING THE GEORGIA SEA TURTLE CENTER'S RELEASE OF SIX TURTLES

**HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an important moment for environmental conservation in Georgia, this year's first public release for the Georgia Sea Turtle Center.

On June 25, 2025, the Georgia Sea Turtle Center on Jekyll Island released six rehabilitated sea turtles back into the Atlantic ocean—five green sea turtles and one Kemp's ridley.

The Kemp's ridley is one of the most endangered sea turtle species in the world.

The release marks another success in their mission to protect coastal wildlife and stands as a testament to the incredible work of the Center's staff and volunteers.

Their tireless efforts not only save individual animals but also protect Georgia's coastal wildlife and educate thousands of visitors each year.

Today, we express our gratitude to the Georgia Sea Turtle Center for their impact on our state and beyond.

## SUPPORTING THE RESOLUTION HONORING THE VICTIMS OF THE ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC CHURCH SHOOTING

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise with a heavy heart in support of Representative OMAR's resolution honoring the victims of the devastating shooting that occurred August 27, at Annunciation Catholic Church in Minneapolis.

On what was supposed to be a joyous day, with the student body gathered for their first student Mass of the year, the children and parishioners of Annunciation Catholic Church experienced a horrific event that has become all too familiar to Americans and Minnesotans. An assailant armed with an assault rifle, shotgun, and pistol fired dozens of rounds at praying children, educators, support staff, and parishioners. Two students were murdered, 8-year-old Fletcher Merkel and 10-year-old Harper Moyski. Dozens were wounded, and many more are enduring emotional trauma that they will carry for life. It is heartbreaking that only two months after my friends Speaker Emerita Melissa Hoffman and her husband Mark were murdered, and Senator John Hoffman and his wife Yvette were shot, Minnesotans are once again grieving for victims of gun violence.

I am grateful for the immediate actions of the older students, adults, law enforcement,

EMTs, and medical personnel whose actions prevented a horrible situation from becoming even worse. Lives were saved thanks to the bravery of those who took swift action.

Mr. Speaker, we are decades late in taking meaningful action to prevent the mass shootings we are all too accustomed to. Under President Biden, Democrats and Republicans joined together to pass the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the first bill addressing the gun violence epidemic since Republicans allowed the assault weapons ban to expire in 2004. We have a duty to protect Americans from gun violence. Especially American children, for whom guns are the leading cause of death in America. It is time we turn our collective grief into collective action.

I would like to include in the RECORD a news article titled Richfield couple in their 80s among the 21 wounded during Annunciation Church shooting by the Minnesota Star Tribune. The article profiles a handful of the many victims of this shooting. I hope everyone will take the time to learn about who they are:

[From the Minnesota Star Tribune, Sept. 2, 2015]

**RICHFIELD COUPLE IN THEIR 80S AMONG THE 21  
WOUNDED DURING ANNUNCIATION CHURCH  
SHOOTING**

(By Paul Walsh, Laura Yuen and Sharyn Jackson)

Families are sharing the extent of their children's injuries as well as stories of their courage and resilience while protecting their friends and "little buddies."

As the shock begins to wear off, some families of children wounded Wednesday at Annunciation Church in Minneapolis are revealing details of their kids' injuries on online fundraising sites. Others, including one girl grazed by a bullet, have spoken to reporters outside the church.

Stories of bravery and resilience are beginning to emerge as well. Some kids wounded during the shooting were protecting friends or their "little buddies" at school from a storm of bullets.

Fletcher Merkel, 8, and Harper Moyski, 10, were killed in the shooting. Of the 21 who were injured, 16 were children. Eight families have so far created GoFundMe pages. Here is what we know about the students who were caught in the gunfire, just days after returning to the classroom from summer break, and two of the three adults:

**WESTON HALSNE**

Weston quickly became the face and the voice of youngsters who were inside Annunciation Church last week when gunfire broke out. He told reporters about his friend Victor Greenawalt (see below) shielding him from the barrage of gunfire.

At first, Weston seemingly came away physically unscathed. However, it turns out Weston "will need surgery to remove a bullet fragment that is lodged in his neck, dangerously close to his carotid artery," his aunt, Allison Hawes, wrote on an online fundraising page she started for Weston's family.

"You've been amazed by his quick wit, awed by his persistence, and charmed by his earnestness," Hawes said. "If you've been watching the news, you've seen his grief stricken face and heard, despite his shock,

Weston's account of the horrific details during the mass at Annunciation Church. And in spite of everything, this 10-year-old boy was able to express appreciation for his friends and pray for their recovery.

**VICTOR GREENAWALT**

When fifth-grader Weston spoke to reporters after Wednesday's shooting, he recounted that his brave friend Victor "laid on top of me" to shield Weston from the bullets and ended up getting hit.

Victor Greenawalt's uncle, Mike Kelly, said his nephew's "selfless acts" helped spare the lives of his friends.

"But he and his sister were injured in the process," Kelly wrote on an online fundraising site. "Vic, along with his family, have started the long journey of recovery. A journey that involves unknown and ongoing future medical costs."

A sign seen Thursday at a memorial outside the church that someone drew said, simply, "Thank You Victor."

**GENEVIEVE BISEK**

Genevieve Bisek was shot in the neck, and the 11-year-old's "medical journey is uncertain," according to an online fundraising campaign begun on behalf of the family. A spokesperson at HCMC said Genevieve was in satisfactory condition as of midday Friday.

"This courageous child, her family, and the entire community are struggling to comprehend the unimaginable," the campaign's posting read. "Genevieve's older sister was also present during the tragedy, bravely helping her Mass buddy to safety. She now carries the emotional weight of that day, questioning if she will ever feel the same again."

**SOPHIA FORCHAS**

One of the children wounded was taken to the hospital where her mother was working as a nurse. Seventh-grader Sophia Forchas remained at HCMC on Friday in critical condition, a hospital spokeswoman said.

According to an online fundraising campaign started to help the family with medical and other expenses, Sophia's mother, Amy Forchas, is a pediatric critical care nurse who reported for work in response to the shooting.

Amy Forchas showed up at HCMC "before knowing it was her children's school that was attacked and that her daughter was critically injured," a posting on the campaign's webpage read.

Also at the scene at the time was Sophia's younger brother, Anthony, the posting disclosed. The fundraising campaign includes a photo of Sophia and Anthony, a fourth grader, together outside the school and wearing their uniforms and big smiles.

"Though he was physically unharmed," the posting continued, "the trauma of witnessing such a terrifying event—and knowing his sister was critically injured—is something no child should ever experience."

**LYDIA KAISER**

Twelve-year-old Lydia Kaiser was wounded while protecting her "little buddy" during Annunciation's first Mass of the school year, according to an online fundraising campaign started to help Lydia's family with medical and other expenses.

Her father, Harry Kaiser, is an Annunciation gym teacher and "was also in attendance and helped to secure the room, to keep

• 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.

children safe, and stuck with them all until they were reunited with their families, even while his daughter was entering the emergency room.”

ENDRE GUNTER

Natalie Davis said her family’s world “was turned upside down” when her 13-year-old nephew was shot at the church Wednesday. In a posting on an online fundraising campaign on behalf of Endre Gunter’s family, Davis wrote that the eighth-grader was shot twice while attending Mass.

“It’s impossible to make sense of this act of violence against children, in a place that should have been a sanctuary of peace and safety,” Davis wrote.

“In the face of unimaginable fear and pain, Endre showed strength and faith beyond his years.”

Davis said that before Endre went into surgery, he asked the doctor, “‘Can you say a prayer with me?’”

VIVIAN ST. CLAIR

Despite being shot, 9-year-old Vivian St. Clair remained resilient through the most terrifying moments.

An online fundraising campaign started on behalf of Vivian’s family noted that despite being shot in her back and her arm, she “ran from the church to the school gym, where a police officer scooped her up and rushed her to an ambulance.”

Vivian was taken to HCMC, where her mother works, the posting continued. “Through it all, she continues to smile and radiate sweetness,” the campaign read.

“She’s been telling people how excited she is to swim at her grandma’s pool in Arizona [Thursday] evening with her dad, Joe—just showing how innocent and hopeful she remains.”

DAVID HAEG

A smiling boy with two missing front teeth wears a backpack and a green school uniform polo smiles on what appears to be his front stoop.

Six-year-old David Haeg has undergone surgery and has more days ahead being cared for in a hospital pediatric intensive care unit, according to an online fundraiser started on behalf of his family.

“His road to recovery will be long, but he is showing incredible strength and resilience,” the online posting read. “In the midst of this unimaginable time, the last thing David’s family should have to worry about is mounting medical expenses.”

ASTORIA SAFE

On Thursday while visiting a memorial at Annunciation, Astoria Safe, 10, placed a stuffed animal on a display for one of her friends, Harper Moyski, who was killed in the attack. A shot grazed Astoria on the forehead, and a bullet fragment was lodged there. Doctors deemed it too dangerous to remove but said it wouldn’t cause long-term problems.

Astoria told a reporter she’s feeling OK. She also described how she helped pull two other kids down next to her when the bullets started flying.

“I had two buddies side by side, and I just pushed their heads down to make sure they were safe,” she said. “I thought it was fireworks, it was just crazy. And the smell was terrible.”

RONALD AND SUZAN WILSON

Ronald Wilson, 87, and Suzan Wilson, 82, of Richfield, were among three adults who were wounded in the Aug. 27 gunfire at Annunciation, their family confirmed Tuesday. An online medical update from over the weekend written by a daughter has been read more than 5,300 times as of midday Tuesday. It notes that Ronald Wilson came away with

a minor cut on his head. Suzan Wilson, however, suffered serious injuries to her head from shrapnel.

“As my parents . . . enter this later stage of life, my siblings and I have lovingly and constantly been reminding them to make safe choices like not getting on ladders or shoveling the walk,” Jenny Harding wrote. “Unfortunately, on Wednesday August 27th, being at mass at Annunciation Church turned out to be unsafe.”

Harding went on to share that “my mom walked to the ambulance herself while noticing all of the ‘big strong police officers’ giving comfort to children everywhere she looked. My dad comforted one of the injured children in the ambulance on the way to the hospital.”

A member of the Wilsons’ family said Tuesday they were not ready to share more about the couple.

Louis Krauss of the Minnesota Star Tribune contributed to this report.

I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

## CORDELE WATERMELON

### HON. EARL L. “BUDDY” CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a Georgia town that has earned itself an unusual title, Cordele, Georgia.

Georgia’s agricultural staples are widely known as peanuts, pecans, and peaches; but Cordele has become a major producer of another crop: Watermelon.

This central-Georgia town plays an impressive agricultural role within the state, with a population of just under 10,000, it boasts a massive contribution to the region’s agricultural production of cotton, peanuts, and oddly enough watermelon.

Southern Living magazine just named Cordele, Georgia as the Watermelon Capital of the World, yes you heard that correctly.

This town produces a plethora of summertime fruit, supplying much of the state and the Southeast region with a sweet, refreshing treat to beat the heat.

Cordele also hosts the Watermelon Days Festival which invites thousands of visitors each year.

Today, we congratulate the town of Cordele on being recognized for another agricultural contribution of the state of Georgia, and the title “Watermelon Capital of the World”.

## TRIBUTE TO MASTER SERGEANT LESLIE DIANE KOGER

### HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Master Sergeant Leslie Diane Koger on her retirement after 29 years of distinguished service in the United States Air National Guard. MSgt Koger’s career is one defined by professionalism, leadership, and selfless service. From her beginnings in South Carolina to her final assignment at Joint Base Andrews, she has embodied the highest

traditions of military service that leaves a legacy on the Airmen she has led and mentored.

A proud native of Moncks Corner, South Carolina, MSgt Koger graduated from Macdonia High School before embarking on her military career in July 1996 when she enlisted in the South Carolina Air National Guard’s 169th Fighter Wing, 245th Air Traffic Control Squadron. After completing her technical training as an Information Manager at Keesler Air Force Base, she quickly distinguished herself as a talented leader and mentor. Over the years, she advanced through key roles at the squadron, group, and headquarters levels, serving with distinction at McEntire Joint National Guard Base, the Pentagon, and the Air National Guard Readiness Center at Joint Base Andrews.

Throughout her career, MSgt Koger deployed seven times in support of Operations Southern Watch, Iraqi Freedom, and Freedom Sentinel, as well as multiple Air Expeditionary Force deployments and exercises. Her leadership was instrumental in earning her unit the Meritorious Unit Award, and her administrative teams were consistently recognized for exceptional service in deployed environments. She also played a critical role in preparing the next generation of Airmen, mentoring countless service members who have gone on to leadership positions themselves.

MSgt Koger’s commitment to professional growth is reflected in her academic and military accomplishments. A graduate of Limestone College, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems Management, she also completed numerous levels of professional military education. Her exemplary service has been recognized with some of the Air Force’s highest honors, including the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Air and Space Commendation Medal, and the Air and Space Achievement Medal with three oak leaf clusters. She was named South Carolina Air National Guard Non-commissioned Officer of the Year in 2004, an early recognition of the leadership and excellence that would define her entire career.

Her most recent assignments—as Assistant Executive Assistant for Intelligence and Cyber Effects Operations at the Air National Guard Readiness Center and as Executive Assistant to the Air National Guard Command Chief at the Pentagon—underscore the trust placed in her judgment, discretion, and leadership at the highest levels of the Air National Guard. In these positions, she supported directorates and leaders responsible for the readiness of Air National Guard units across all 54 states and territories, directly impacting the mission success of more than 90 Air Guard wings nationwide.

Mr. Speaker, as MSgt Leslie Diane Koger concludes her service at the end of 2025, we honor her for nearly three decades of dedication to our Nation. She has been a leader, a mentor, and a role model whose example continues to inspire and will for years to come. On behalf of a grateful state and Nation, I thank her for her service and wish her Godspeed in her well-deserved retirement.

RECOGNIZING MR. COLE McANANY  
FOR HIS ACHIEVEMENT IN THE  
MATH OLYMPIAD

**HON. LLOYD SMUCKER**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate and recognize Cole McAnany from the Ephrata Area School District for achieving a perfect score in the prestigious Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary and Middle Schools.

A middle school student in the 11th Congressional District, Cole's accomplishment embodies the educational excellence found in Lancaster County. After competing in the Math Olympiad since he was in 5th grade, Cole was confident in his ability to score big. His hard work in and out of the classroom paid off, placing him among an elite group of just 201 students who also achieved a perfect score. He is in the top two percent of his peers.

Cole represents the high caliber of students in Pennsylvania's 11th Congressional District. His dedication and remarkable abilities reflect his willingness to strive for excellence in everything he does. I congratulate him on this impressive achievement and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING TAYLOR "TAY CHEESE"  
AKHARUME

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable contributions of Ms. Taylor "Tay Cheese" Akharume—a dynamic performer, visionary artist, and Mississippi native whose vibrant talent and trailblazing spirit have left an indelible mark on the world of entertainment.

Born in the heart of Mississippi, Tay Cheesy has risen through the ranks not by following the well-worn paths of the industry, but by forging her own. With deep roots in cities like Nashville, Baton Rouge, Memphis, and Jackson, each place has shaped and enriched her creative expression, culminating in a signature style that is bold, authentic, and electrifying.

Tay Cheesy's journey is one of grit, vision, and fearless determination. While others waited for opportunity, she created her own—eschewing traditional industry gatekeepers to build a name for herself on her own terms. Her raw talent and relentless work ethic have earned her coveted collaborations with legendary artists such as Willie Clayton, Uncle Luke, Grammy Award-winner Jon Batiste, West Love, and Cupid.

Yet, Tay Cheesy is more than just a performer. She is a choreographer, creative director, motivational speaker, and cultural ambassador whose work uplifts and inspires. Her performances are not simply artistic displays; they are storytelling in motion—celebrations of resilience, joy, and empowerment. With each step, she moves audiences and amplifies the voices of those too often left unheard.

In an industry that often demands conformity, Tay Cheesy stands out as a beacon

of authenticity. Her journey speaks to the power of self-belief and the impact of creating space for others to shine. Through her creativity and purpose-driven leadership, she continues to pave the way for future generations of artists to dream beyond boundaries.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Taylor "Tay Cheese" Akharume for her outstanding contributions to the arts, her unwavering dedication to her craft, and her enduring commitment to representing Mississippi with brilliance, pride, and purpose.

RECOGNIZING THE GEORGIA NEW  
IVIES

**HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two esteemed universities in Georgia.

This year, Forbes Magazine introduced a list of 2025 "New Ivy" league schools.

The list highlights 10 public and 10 private institutions across the country that are at the Ivy-League-level of prestige.

Because of their academic rigor, competitive admissions, and strong career outcomes, Georgia Tech University and Emory University stood out.

Georgia Tech is renowned for its innovation and return on investment.

Their recent graduate career placement rates consistently hover above 90 percent, which is an impressive figure.

Emory has earned praise for its research programs and global health initiatives, with a history of groundbreaking medical discoveries.

One of these discoveries includes the first successful bone marrow transplant in a human patient.

The recognition cements both schools as academic powerhouses—and proves Georgia continues to rise as a destination for elite higher education.

We should all be proud of both universities for this tremendous accomplishment.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT  
OF COLUMBIA NATIONAL GUARD  
HOME RULE ACT

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia National Guard Home Rule Act, which would give the mayor of the District of Columbia control over the D.C. National Guard. Representative JAMIE RASKIN is the co-lead of this bill in the House, and Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN is the sponsor of this bill in the Senate.

The governors of the states and territories control their National Guards while the president controls the D.C. National Guard. This bill would give the D.C. mayor, who knows D.C. better than the president, the same control over the D.C. National Guard that the governors of the states and territories have over their National Guards. The president would

have the same authority to federalize the D.C. National Guard that the president has to federalize the National Guards of the states and territories.

The attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, the events at Lafayette Square on June 1, 2020, and the current deployment of the D.C. National Guard in D.C. are prime examples of why the D.C. mayor should control the D.C. National Guard. During January 6th, the D.C. National Guard was not deployed to the Capitol for several hours, likely costing lives and prolonging the attack. At Lafayette Square, the D.C. National Guard forcibly removed peaceful protestors. Currently, the D.C. National Guard is deployed in D.C. in response to a crime emergency declared by President Trump.

Not only does presidential control over the D.C. National Guard violate D.C. home rule, it also may create a loophole in the Posse Comitatus Act, which limits the military's involvement in civilian law enforcement. The Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel has opined that when the D.C. National Guard is operating for non-federal purposes, even though it is an exclusively federal entity, it may be used for civilian law enforcement without violating the Posse Comitatus Act.

In the 117th Congress, the House passed this bill as part of the fiscal year (FY) 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and the FY 2023 NDAA.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING THE LIFE OF AUREO  
IVAN CARDONA

**HON. RITCHIE TORRES**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. TORRES of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Aureo Ivan Cardona, a proud son of Puerto Rico and a tireless champion for the South Bronx.

Born in Arecibo and raised in Hunts Point, Aureo dedicated his life to building community through housing, youth sports, and public service. He helped rebuild the Bronx after the fires of the 1970's, served as the youngest District Leader in New York City, and led with compassion as president of the South Bronx Housing Corporation and Chairman of the Sports Foundation.

His work extended far beyond our city from supporting Cuban refugees in Florida to empowering underserved communities around the world. Through it all, Aureo remained deeply grounded in faith, family, and service.

He leaves behind a legacy of justice, creativity, and love and a Bronx that is stronger because he called it home.

May his memory be a blessing.

HONORING CHAIRWOMAN OPICI'S  
LEADERSHIP AT WINE AND SPIRITS  
WHOLESALE OF AMERICA

**HON. NICOLE MALLIOTAKIS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, since her historic appointment as WSWA's first Chairwoman in September 2024, marking a milestone for women's leadership in a historically male-dominated industry, Ms. Opici has led with vision and resolve, advancing the interests of multi-generational, family-owned distributors across the Nation.

During her tenure, Chairwoman Opici has been a steadfast advocate for critical tax and trade policies, including securing 199A permanence in the One Big Beautiful Bill, championing the repeal of tariffs on imported wine and spirits, and empowering grassroots advocacy from all three-tiers of the beverage alcohol industry.

Chairwoman Opici's tenure was defined by dynamic leadership—uniting the wholesale distribution community, elevating advocacy, and securing policy victories that empower family-owned businesses nationwide. Under her guidance, WSWA continues to strengthen the industry's infrastructure, amplify its voice in Washington, and lay the groundwork for sustained, responsible growth.

We requested that a flag be flown over the U.S. Capitol as a tribute to her transformative contributions to the legacy of America's family-owned wine and spirits wholesalers.

GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY

**HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Georgia Ports Authority for their decades of servitude to Georgia, the United States, and the entire world.

Georgia Ports authority operates the national gateway ports of Savannah and Brunswick, allowing customers to compete and succeed in global markets.

The Savannah Port is one of the most connected ports in the United States with over thirty-five ships, forty-two double stack trains, and sixteen thousand trucks moving in and out every week.

Consisting of more than six hundred and nine thousand jobs throughout Georgia, they look towards the future with enriching intern and community involvement programs that pave the way for future generations.

In the picture next to me is one of Savannah's own, Ross Goodman, a rising senior at the University of Georgia, who is interning at the Savannah Port.

Over the next decade, Georgia Ports Authority will invest \$4.5 billion in port and inland infrastructure to ensure that the state and entire southeast region continue to have the most competitive ports in the Nation.

Today, we honor Georgia Ports Authority for their unwavering effort in providing a strong future for American commerce.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S ATTACK ON  
THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE

**HON. JAMIE RASKIN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of this Congress, nearly 60,000 of my constituents in Maryland's beautiful Eighth District woke up every morning to serve their country in the federal government. Today, thousands of professional civil service employees, among them cancer researchers, climate experts, food safety inspectors, air traffic controllers and civil rights lawyers, have been illegally fired or forced to retire from a job they loved and in which they excelled. They are victims of the Trump Administration's drive to gut our government and sell it for parts while replacing the professional civil service with unqualified political sycophants.

One of my constituents working at the National Institutes of Health wrote this summer about what it's been like to be a federal worker during a period of administrative chaos and vicious attacks on federal workers. This achingly beautiful and stirring essay drives home how the loss of her service and the service of her colleagues will affect all Americans. I include in the RECORD her essay as we return to session this September, so that my colleagues and all Americans can read it and reflect on the enormity of President Trump's attack on the federal workforce.

WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE A FEDERAL EMPLOYEE  
IN 2025

(Commentary published in the Federal News  
Network on June 13, 2025)

I remember driving with my father down Rockville Pike in Bethesda, Maryland as a little girl. We would pass a large campus of impressive buildings called the National Institutes of Health. I told my dad I would work there one day. He said no, that place was for doctors and scientists. I knew I would find a way.

Many years later, I did. In March 2008, I began my journey at NIH, working with several institutes until I found my home at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. I stated in the Division of Translational Research, then moved to the Division of Clinical Research, where I remain today.

How proud I have been to work alongside titans of the scientific community. Dr. Francis Collins, physician and former director of the National Institutes of Health and the National Human Genome Research Institute, led the NIH with vision, dedication and hope. Dr. Anthony Fauci, physician and immunologist, served as director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and Chief Medical Advisor to seven different presidential administrations.

NIH scientists have made major contributions to health and medical science for over 100 years, including 163 Nobel laureates, 214 winners of the Lasker-DeBakey Clinical Medical Research Award, and more than 200 members of the U.S. National Academies of Science and Medicine. Non-scientists like myself are essential to NIH's day-to-day operations and key to understanding the institution's history and mission. It had been the happiest and proudest time in my long career.

Everything changed in 2025.

The Trump administration cut billions of dollars in biomedical research funding, re-

sulting in dire consequences for the scientific research community, including universities and medical centers. This action has crippled lifesaving research and innovation. I was once so proud to say I worked for the world's premier biomedical research facility. All of that has changed.

Diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives were scrubbed away at the direction of this new administration, as though they were dirty words. Donald Trump created the Department of Government Efficiency and put Elon Musk at its head. In record time, Musk moved from disrupting social media and automotive industries to targeting the federal government itself.

The indignities were swift and demoralizing. We were required to provide weekly accounts of "five things" we accomplished, as though our decades of service meant nothing. They dictated what we could use in our email signatures and instilled paranoia in every aspect of our jobs—all with the support of the man elected to lead our country.

In a shocking turn of events, Musk shut down the U.S. Agency for International Development. The impact was immediate: food and crucial medications abandoned in warehouses, vital programs closed, workers laid off. The U.S. government, once known for humanitarian assistance, quickly transformed into something unrecognizable. It is estimated that over 300,000 people, including children, have died because of this decision. But that would not be their worst offense.

The Trump administration canceled grants at NIH, fired intramural researchers, and planned to cut billions in indirect costs. What they fail to understand is that federal funding for biomedical research is central to healthcare innovation. The dismantling of this once-great institution will adversely affect American and global lives for years to come. They stripped away vital departments like human resources and acquisitions. There is no one to answer personnel questions, and we are expected to perform without basic supplies. This is not a well-thought-out plan, but something executed with malice by an organization supposedly focused on eliminating waste, fraud and abuse.

On February 14, 2025, scientists and medical researchers began to be dismissed by President Trump's administration. They were told it was due to probationary status and poor job performance. Nothing could be further from the truth. I know because one of them was my son.

This is as much his story as mine. He worked as a contractor for nearly twenty years at NIH, helping to run a lab at the National Cancer Institute. He devoted himself to cancer research after watching my father die from lung and brain cancer. While not a scientist himself, he was popular, well-respected and beloved for his hard work and dedication.

Less than two years ago, in recognition for his service, he was converted from contractor to federal employee. We were so proud. On a day ironically devoted to love, my son was yanked from the position he cared about and discarded like garbage. He was a dedicated worker with the highest possible rating on his yearly performance appraisals. His staff and senior leadership were shocked, dismayed and bereft at losing such an important team member.

My son delivered this news with a crack in his voice, something that will bring any mother to her knees. He felt as though a piece of his soul was destroyed. He immediately filed an appeal with the Merit Systems Protection Board. Four months later, he has heard nothing.

For these four months, my once cheerful, talkative son has become withdrawn, sad and

rightfully prone to despair. He describes his treatment as diminishing, brutal and humiliating. Initially, he kept in constant contact with his former team, who continue to support and miss him. Now, we have agreed never to speak of NIH or the current administration as it is simply too much to bear.

The National Institutes of Health limps along on invisible crutches, its significance on life support, its staff feeling diminished, dazed and confused. When this madness will end is anyone's guess. With the Department of Health and Human Services under Robert Kennedy Jr.'s direction and our country steered by leaders who seem intent on destruction rather than progress, there is little to hope for.

They say that change and grief are cousins. Indeed, they are inseparable companions in these dark times for federal service and scientific advancement.

*A federal employee.*

#### RECOGNIZING GOOD360 IN HONOR OF NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

**HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize the extraordinary work of Good360, an organization located in the heart of my district in Alexandria, Virginia. This organization plays a vital, yet often overlooked, role in reducing the impact of large-scale emergencies and disasters across the United States.

As the second largest nonprofit in the Nation, Good360 is leading the way in providing responsible and efficient distribution of unused goods to communities affected by disasters and crises. Good360 is meeting disaster-driven challenges head-on, heading up a nationwide network of nonprofit partners and corporate donors to deliver essential products to individuals and families in times of crisis. Through continuous coordination and dialogue, Good360 has demonstrated its capacity to serve as a strategic partner with local governments, relief organizations, and corporate leaders in both the immediate aftermath of disasters and throughout the long recovery process.

With increasingly frequent and severe weather events, public health crises, and other large-scale emergencies, the ability to respond quickly and efficiently has never been more critical. Good360 and its partners ensure that life-saving assistance and high-quality supplies reach those who need them most.

Good360 collaborates with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s Donations Unit as well as a wide range of national nonprofits and local community organizers to fill critical gaps in disaster response and recovery by leveraging private sector resources. Moreover, Good360's preparedness model reduces waste, improves efficiency, and strengthens the capacity of frontline communities to withstand and recover from future disasters.

Good360's innovative use of advanced data and resource matching technology accelerates donation routing and optimizes logistics. This system enables the delivery of critical goods up to three times faster, while minimizing environmental impact and ensuring that the right

products reach the right communities at the right time.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Good360 for its dedication to disaster recovery, preparedness, and innovation. Their extraordinary work exemplifies the spirit of National Preparedness Month—it is a reminder that true readiness is built on effective partnerships, creative solutions, and neighbors helping one another. As we prepare for the challenges ahead, I encourage my colleagues to support initiatives like those sponsored by Good360, which make a measurable difference in disaster resilience and recovery across our Nation.

#### CELEBRATING RAYMOND "RAY" DUFFY'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

**HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Raymond "Ray" Duffy as he celebrates his 100th birthday.

Born on August 16, 1925, to parents R. Francis and Marie Duffy, Ray was raised in Boston, Massachusetts, alongside his brother, Bob. Ray and his family spent their summers in Rocky Nook, a neighborhood in the coastal Town of Kingston, where Ray enjoyed digging clams. When he was 12, Ray started rowing his dingy down the Jones River to work with George Shiverick and help George build his award-winning ships.

At the age of only 16, Ray graduated at the top of his class from the Boston Latin School in 1941. Ray then began studying at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to pursue his dream of becoming a naval architect. He paid for his first year by digging clams at Rocky Nook over the summer.

In the spring of 1942, Ray enlisted in the United States Navy after being assured that he could finish the school year at MIT. However, he received a telegram two days later with instructions to report for training. During his years of service, Ray received a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering from Cornell University as part of the Navy's V12 program and served as an ensign on the USS *Randall* in San Francisco.

Following his service in the Navy, Ray returned home to Boston, where he met his wife Martina "Marty" at a dance. The couple was married on June 26, 1948, and in 1952, they purchased a plot of land in South Weymouth where they would build a home and raise their five children. Over the years, Ray built a successful career as a sales engineer and later as Vice President of Sales for the Tubular Rivet and Stud Company, before he founded his own company, RF Duffy Associates Inc. Duffy Associates grew into a larger and diverse business that included Duffy International, an electronics distribution company.

Known affectionately as the "Admiral" by his family, Ray continued to spend his summers in Rocky Nook after he and Marty purchased his parents' home. Throughout the years, Ray took his family on legendary sailing and boating trips and became an avid lobsterman. He continued lobstering well into his late eighties.

Beyond his professional success and passion for the sea, Ray remained deeply involved in the community. He served as a

lector at St. Thomas Moore Catholic Church and St. Francis Xavier Parish, where he was President of the Knights of Columbus. Ray was also a member Weymouth Rotary Club, before moving and joining the Braintree Rotary Club, where he served as President for many years. Additionally, Ray was elected as a town meeting member for the Town of Braintree and greatly enjoyed participating in town governance and supporting the community.

Sadly, Ray's wife, Marty, passed away in 2008, but Ray continued to be active with the Braintree Rotary Club and throughout the South Shore community. Today, Ray enjoys spending time with his grandchildren in Rocky Nook as well as Naples during the winter. On August 16, 2025, Ray will celebrate his 100th birthday with his family in Rocky Nook.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Ray Duffy, and I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating a century well lived and wishing Ray many more years of health and happiness.

#### HONORING BESSIE PELLO

**HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Brunswick native, Bessie Mabel Mumford Pello.

Bessie was an upstanding member of both Morningside Baptist Church and Beverly Shares Baptist, where she served in multiple leadership roles and utilized her artistic talents to teach Sunday School.

She was a veteran of the United States Army, serving during the Korean War, and she was one of the first enlistees of the Women's Army Corps (CORE).

After her military service, she married her husband Dan, and they started their family.

Once the children and grandchildren were out of the house, Bessie went to work for her son Steve at Pello Body Shop, where she remained for over 30 years.

Today, we honor a remarkable woman who was a faithful servant to her Lord and Savior, a leader, and a pillar of the Brunswick community.

#### REPORT (H. REPT. 119-199) TO ACCOMPANY HOUSE RESOLUTION 580

**HON. VIRGINIA FOXX**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the Rules Committee report (H. Rept. 119-199) to accompany House Resolution 580 should have included in its waivers of all points of order against consideration of H.R. 3633 and S. 1582 a disclosure of the following violation:

Section 303 of the Congressional Budget Act which prohibits consideration of legislation providing new budget authority, a change in revenues, or a change in the public debt limit, for a fiscal year until the budget resolution for that year has been agreed to.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CHARLES "CHARLIE" WEBB

### HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Mr. Charles "Charlie" Webb. Charlie graduated high school in Colorado in May 1970 and in August 1970 reported to Fort Knox, Kentucky, for Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training at the Armor School. He was assigned to the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment in January 1971 in Bindlach serving as border patrol between Germany and Czechoslovakia. He and his company referred to themselves as The Speed Bump because "that's what it would have looked like if the WARSAW Pact had decided to come across." This was his favorite assignment.

He was then assigned to Fort Carson, Colorado, with the 10th Cavalry (part of the 4th Infantry Division). It was while he was there that he met his wife, Mary. His next assignment was back to Germany with the 1st Battalion 64th Armor Regiment for three years. During this time, he transitioned to the M1 series tanks.

Later he was assigned to the 3rd Cavalry Regiment at Fort Bliss, Texas. He was there for a year and transferred to Fort Hood, Texas, because they already had M1 tanks. At Fort Hood, he was assigned to the 1st Battalion 8th Cavalry Regiment, part of the 1st Cavalry Division. He served as a Platoon Sergeant, and eventually, as the First Sergeant for D Company. While serving as the 1st Sergeant, he was notified he'd be attending the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy. It was there, in January of 1990, he went back to Fort Bliss for six months of school.

After graduation, he expected to be assigned to Korea since he had never done a tour there, but instead, he was retained as faculty at Fort Bliss for the next three years as a lesson writer and instructor.

In December 1992, Armor Branch contacted him concerning his next assignment. The Assignments person gave him a choice; he could be the First Sergeant of a tank company with the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea, or a tank company supporting the Armor School at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Neither choice was a desirable option, so he chose to retire and in 1993, he moved to Anniston, Alabama, to work at Fort McClellan. However, he had no intentions of ending his service to the United States. Here, he was responsible for running the Battle Simulation Center for the Chemical School. When Fort McClellan was closed, the Anniston Chemical Demil Facility (ANCDF) was being built, and Charlie was hired there in July 1999. While working at ANCDF, he had an interest in making a scale model of the plant. Because cameras weren't allowed on site, he observed and documented, from memory, the layout of the facilities. He worked on a model at home for over four years. The model is one of a kind, and the only one in existence. He donated the large-scale model to the Army and it's on display at the Museum Support Center in Anniston Alabama (MSCA).

Charlie worked from July 1999 until the completion of the ANCDF mission and left in

August 2013. He started in April 2014, as a volunteer at MSCA and is still volunteering today. Charlie's vast knowledge and dedication to detail has enhanced the effectiveness of the museum. Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Charlie and thanking him for his service to our country and his dedication to the MSCA.

### CONGRATULATING ANNE MATTHEWS

### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Anne Matthews, the first female Vice President of Rotary International, on being awarded South Carolina's highest civilian award, The Order of the Palmetto.

Authorized by Governor Henry McMaster, The Order of the Palmetto is awarded to the State's most accomplished and esteemed individuals who make a significant contribution to a particular community. Anne represents all that this award entails as she has devoted her life to helping those in need.

As a fellow Rotarian myself, I have witnessed Anne dedicate her life to serving the people of South Carolina and beyond in many capacities in business, Rotary International, and more.

Having degrees from Coker College, Appalachian State University, and a doctorate from the University of South Carolina, Anne also excelled in education, including as President of the National Business Education Association.

Additionally, she served as president, chair, and/or board member of numerous national and state boards, promoting and speaking across America and internationally on critical educational issues and the need to serve the less fortunate.

Anne has worked in 73 countries, championing humanitarian efforts, and promoting South Carolina values. Notably, as chair of the Polio Eradication Advocacy Task Force for America, where we worked together with other members of Congress to raise over four billion dollars for the global fight against Polio.

Anne embodies leadership, compassion, and service. She has achieved many accomplishments and has contributed greatly to the state.

I send my warmest congratulations and best wishes. I am appreciative for all she has done for South Carolina.

### HONORING CONNOR DANIEL

### HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the amazing sporting days achievements of Connor Daniel.

Connor has been competing worldwide representing team USA in England and Cyprus.

While competing Connor placed in the top 20 both times overall and won the World English Sporting Junior Championship and the World FITASC championship.

Connor was also a member of the USA team which took home the World English Sporting Junior and World FITASC Junior team championships.

His performances in these tournaments earned him the FITASC Junior World Cup as well.

Connor has also recently committed to Georgia Southern to compete on their clay shooting team.

Today, we celebrate Connor and his amazing achievements in the world of clay shooting.

### WELCOMING ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

### HON. CHARLES J. "CHUCK" FLEISCHMANN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend a warm welcome to His All-Holiness Bartholomew, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and spiritual leader of Orthodox Christianity. Recognized as "First Among Equals" among Orthodox bishops, he is visiting our Nation's Capital to receive the Templeton Prize—the world's most prestigious award honoring contributions to religion and science.

As Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All-Holiness leads the world's second-largest Christian church. Since assuming this role in 1991, he has earned global respect for his spiritual leadership and commitment to peace. Guided by his belief that "war in the name of religion is war against religion," Patriarch Bartholomew has built strong relationships with religious and political leaders in every continent to promote unity among faiths.

In 1997, Patriarch Bartholomew became the first Ecumenical Patriarch to visit the United States, and it is our great pleasure to welcome him back as he meets with the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress. I recognize and celebrate his lifelong dedication of peace-making and his steadfast efforts to build bridges between East and West, Christian and Muslim, and all people of good will. May his presence here remind us of our commitment to remain "One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

I extend my warmest welcome to His All-Holiness and pray that his visit will be blessed with success, fellowship, and hope for the future of our common humanity.

### COMMEMORATING MR. JEFF AND MRS. DIANA MERRITT OF OPERATION WE CARE

### HON. ANDY HARRIS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. HARRIS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two selfless, hardworking constituents from Salisbury, Maryland, Mr. Jeff and Mrs. Diana Merritt. They began Operation We Care in 2007, an organization providing more than 2,000 care packages annually to deployed military personnel. They also work to



support police and first responders in several counties throughout the First Congressional District.

The work of organizations such as Operation We Care is incredibly meaningful and important to our military and first responders. I would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Merritt for supporting those in our community that work to keep us safe at home and abroad.

I wish Mr. and Mrs. Merritt the best of luck in continuing their efforts to make Maryland's First Congressional District better in every way.

#### CELEBRATING THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS' BICENTENNIAL

#### HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 200th anniversary of the City of Washington, Illinois, a proud and resilient community I am honored to represent.

Founded in 1825 by blacksmith William Holland, Washington began as Hollands Grove and was renamed in 1837 to honor President George Washington. The city quickly grew, electing its first town president in 1839, officially incorporating in 1857, and reorganizing as a city in 1878 with Peter Fifer as its first mayor.

Washington holds a strong connection to Abraham Lincoln, who visited often while traveling the Tenth Judicial Circuit. In 1857, he defended two residents accused of helping escaped slaves along the Underground Railroad, marking a powerful moment in the city's history.

Washington later gained national recognition through George Heyl's pony farm, home to champion Shetland ponies including King Larigo and Creations King. The original barns still stand on North Main Street as a tribute to that chapter.

The city's strength was tested in 2013, when a powerful EF-4 tornado destroyed more than one thousand structures and took the lives of three residents. In the aftermath, the people of Washington came together with courage and compassion, rebuilding stronger than ever.

Today, Washington is home to more than 16,000 residents. The city has become a destination for visitors who annually flock to its Good Neighbor Days festival in the spring and to the quaint locally owned businesses occupying century-old buildings lining its historic downtown square.

I congratulate the City of Washington on its bicentennial and commend its citizens for carrying forward a legacy of perseverance, service, and pride. I look forward to its continued success in the years ahead.

#### HONORING WYNNNTON HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

#### HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Wynnton Hill Baptist Church. The

Church celebrated its 164th Anniversary on August 24, 2025, with a service at the church located at 2620 Buena Vista Road in Columbus, Georgia.

Wynnton Hill Baptist Church, established in 1861, proudly stands as the first church of any denomination in the Wynnton area of Columbus, Georgia and the second oldest predominantly African American Church in the Muscogee/Chattahoochee Valley Area. Driven by a deep yearning to create a fellowship for the glory of God through Jesus Christ, a small group of dedicated believers came together under the guidance of Reverend Phillip Owens. They gathered at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Willie and Sarah James to lay the foundation of this spiritual community.

Reverend Owens, who became the first pastor, led the church during its formative years. The congregation demonstrated exceptional commitment by building a bush arbor on land that the church purchased from the James family, using fresh bushes from nearby woodlands for their Saturday gatherings. The church quickly grew, with many souls coming to faith.

The church's first wooden structure served as a worship center, and under Pastor Owens—who served an astounding 47 years—the church flourished. Wynnton Hill has become a testament to the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ, having faced various trials yet overcoming them through faith.

Throughout its 164 years, Wynnton Hill has maintained a legacy of resilience, even amidst challenges and disagreements. The church has birthed three other assemblies—Greater Peace, New Mt. Zion, and Blessed Assurance Baptist Churches—emphasizing the unifying power of the gospel.

Wynnton Hill has been shepherded by numerous dedicated pastors, with Reverend Owens as the longest serving, followed by several other esteemed leaders to include Samuel Daniels, R.T. Lewis, H.H. Hunter, Dr. James H. Carter, Dr. Van J. Malone, F.L. Williams, Dr. R.C. Gates, Robert L. Evans, Dr. Bruce Alford, and Dr. Kenneth Cyrus, who all contributed to the church's growth and community involvement. Several Pastors led the church during periods of transition as Interim Pastors to include Reverend Joe Sales, Reverend Tommy Holston, and Dr. Charles McAfee.

Over the years, many sons and daughters of the House of Wynnton have been licensed to preach the gospel and have gone on to have significant impacts in communities across the Chattahoochee Valley Area and beyond to include Oliver Holston, Tommy Holston, Robert Holston, Robert Evans, Evoucous Thomas, Charles Milton, Isaac Whitfield, Paul Milton, Lewis McCants, James Love, David Holston, Michael David, Carlton Dawson, Artie Johnson, Charlene Dawson, Doris Wade, Eulas Wade and Roy Evans.

Significant milestones include the construction of the first brick building in 1930 that would later house the first public school for African Americans in the basement. The first Education wing was built in 1951. During this time, the Church became a leader in the community in advocating for civil rights and social justice. In 1989, the educational wing was firebombed and destroyed. But the Lord blessed the church to be able to rebuild and dedicate a new wing in 1990. In the same year, the Lord Blessed the Church with a new

sanctuary. The old sanctuary was dedicated as a fellowship hall and named after Pastor J.H. Carter.

In more recent years, under the leadership of Pastor Michael W. Sherman, who has served as Pastor since 2015, the church has embraced technology for worship and has actively engaged in community outreach, including Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas toy drives, and educational initiatives. Pastor Sherman with support of his congregation and supportive First Lady, Alma Taylor Sherman, understands that the ministry of Jesus Christ must be expanded beyond the church walls.

Wynnton Hill Baptist Church remains committed to its mission; to evangelize, educate, and edify in the light of Jesus Christ. As the church continues to shine as a beacon of hope, it looks forward to fulfilling the Great Commission and changing lives both now and in future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me, along with my wife, Vivian and the more 765,000 people of the 2nd Congressional District in honoring Wynnton Hill Baptist Church on its 164th Church Anniversary.

May the blessings of the Lord be upon Wynnton Hill Baptist Church as it continues this sacred journey to bring souls to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

#### HONORING LARRY STOKES

#### HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the late Larry Stokes, who passed away on July 10, 2025.

Dr. Stokes was a well-respected and beloved professor at Savannah State University. He dedicated his life to education and influenced countless students during his tenure at the University.

Because of his unwavering commitment, Dr. Stokes will be fondly remembered for his contributions to academia. He is also known for fostering a love of learning within his classroom and amongst students.

His life was marked by his marriage to The Honorable Judge Tammy Tokes, whom he met and married in 2002. Their relationship is often described as a testament to love, mutual respect, and shared values. Together, they created a loving home for their two children, Kendall and McKenzie.

Dr. Stokes also took immense pride in being a grandfather and greatly cherished the memories with his loved ones.

Today, I ask that we all take a moment to remember Dr. Stokes' legacy of knowledge, kindness, and compassion.

#### SUPPORTING THE PARTNER ACT

#### HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the PARTNER Act, introduced by Congressman CASTRO of Texas, and cosponsored by myself and seven of our colleagues who

are particularly invested in advancing our country's relationships with crucial international organizations.

This bill extends diplomatic privileges and immunities to five multilateral organizations. I am grateful that Congressman CASTRO included a section from my Pacific Partnership Act, which extends diplomatic privileges and immunities to the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the region's premier multilateral organization with eighteen members across Oceania, in the hopes that the PIF will establish a mission to the U.S.

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.

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

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JUDGE EDMUNDO B. GARCIA, JR.

#### HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Judge Edmundo B. Garcia, Jr., a devoted husband, father, public servant, and community leader from San Diego, Texas.

Born in 1936, Judge Garcia dedicated his life to education and public service. For 32 years, he served the San Diego Independent School District as a teacher and administrator, shaping the lives of countless students.

He later went on to serve as Duval County Judge from 1995 until his retirement in 2006, and again as Interim Judge in 2022, earning the respect and trust of his community.

Beyond public office, Judge Garcia was a proud U.S. Army veteran, a 4th Degree Knight of Columbus, and an active member of the San Diego Rotary Club and the Sociedad Católica Mutualista. His civic leadership extended to board service, including the First State Bank of San Diego, and he will be fondly remembered as "the voice" of the San Diego Fighting Vaqueros.

Judge Garcia's legacy is rooted in faith, family, and service. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Rosa Maria, his children, grandchildren, great-granddaughter, and a grateful community.

Mr. Speaker, Judge Garcia lived a life defined by devotion to God, family, and the people of Duval County. Let us be inspired by his legacy.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA POLICE HOME RULE ACT

#### HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia Police Home Rule Act, which would repeal section 740 of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act (HRA). Section 740 allows the president, in the case of an emergency, to direct the D.C. mayor to provide the president the services of D.C.'s police department, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), for federal purposes. Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN is the sponsor of this bill in the Senate.

Under the HRA, "whenever the President . . . determines that special conditions of an emergency nature exist which require the use of the MPD for Federal purposes, he may direct the Mayor to provide him, and the Mayor shall provide, such services of the MPD as the President may deem necessary and appropriate" for 30 days, unless Congress terminates or extends the emergency declaration.

On August 11, 2025, President Trump declared a crime emergency in D.C. pursuant to section 740, even though violent crime reached a more than 30-year low in D.C. in 2024 and is down 27 percent this year compared to the same period last year. President Trump is the first president to invoke section 740, but his invocation is unlawful. While one crime is too many, there is no emergency or federal purpose that allowed President Trump to invoke section 740.

Section 740 is inconsistent with the main purpose of the HRA, which is to "grant to the inhabitants of the District of Columbia powers of local self-government." Giving the president the power to direct the services of MPD is a violation of D.C. home rule. MPD's first responsibility is to protect D.C. residents and visitors, and it must always remain under the authority of the D.C. mayor, who knows D.C. better than the president, to accomplish its mission.

Section 740 is also unnecessary. In the case of a true federal emergency in D.C., the president can deploy federal law enforcement officers and the Armed Forces, and can request the support of MPD, as the Capitol Police did during the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, and as the Federal government does on a regular basis.

At my request, the House's fiscal year 2022 and 2023 D.C. appropriations bills blocked the president from carrying out section 740.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

#### HONORING TOM COUSINS

#### HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Tom Cousins.

Tom Cousins was one of the most influential figures in Georgia's history, transforming Atlanta into one of the Nation's leading cities.

At just 16, he enrolled at the University of Georgia, earning a degree in finance and graduating in the top ten percent of his class. After graduation, he served in the United States Air Force, rising to the rank of First Lieutenant.

Following his service, he founded a real estate company with his father, becoming the largest homebuilder in Georgia.

Tom later purchased key properties in downtown Atlanta and was instrumental in relocating the St. Louis Hawks to the city.

Beyond business, he led the East Lake revitalization project, turning the neighborhood into a thriving urban community.

His vision and leadership left an enduring mark on Georgia and its capital.

Today, we remember Tom Cousins for his extraordinary contributions.

#### HONORING SEAMAN JKHARIA JEFFERSON FOR HER SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY

#### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend an outstanding young Mississippian, Seaman Jkharia Jefferson, for her admirable service in the United States Navy.

A native of Yazoo City, Mississippi, Seaman Jefferson serves aboard the USS *John C. Stennis*, a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier currently operating out of Newport News, Virginia. As one of the largest warships in the world, the *John C. Stennis* represents the strength, commitment, and global reach of America's naval power—and Seaman Jefferson is proudly contributing to that mission.

A 2024 graduate of Yazoo City High School, Seaman Jefferson exemplifies the values of discipline, dedication, and resilience instilled by her community. Reflecting on her journey, she credits her mentors and family—particularly her mother, Koashecal, and mentors Col. Robert A. Avery (Ret.) and Charles Weathersby—for shaping her mindset and encouraging her pursuit of a career in the military.

The Navy is celebrating its 250th birthday this year, marking a quarter-millennium of steadfast service to our Nation and commitment to the security of maritime commerce and freedom of navigation. With 90 percent of global commerce moving by sea, and our digital infrastructure depending on secure undersea cables, our Navy's mission has never been more critical.

Aircraft carriers like the *John C. Stennis* are self-contained mobile airports, capable of deploying with unmatched speed, endurance, and combat capability. They are often the first to respond to crises, deliver humanitarian aid, and project U.S. presence across the globe.

Seaman Jefferson's story is a testament to courage and perseverance. "My proudest accomplishment so far is getting through boot camp," she said. "Getting through those 10 weeks and coming out stronger is something I am very proud of." As a woman in a male-dominated field, she also recognizes the importance of representation and empowerment, saying, "I hope I can show other females they can do it just as well as any man can."



Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Seaman Jkharia Jefferson. Her determination, service, and example represent the very best of Mississippi and the United States Navy. We thank her for her service and wish her continued success as she advances in her military career.

**RECOGNIZING PENN MANOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SEA AIR AND LAND CHALLENGE**

**HON. LLOYD SMUCKER**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate and recognize Mushna Subba, Ben Thomas, and Wyatt Clare from Penn Manor High School for achieving two first-place finishes in the Sea Air and Land Challenge (SEAL) at Millersville University.

SEAL is a STEM competition sponsored by the Office of Naval Research. Millersville University is one of the many schools in the Nation that host this program, bringing in teams of high school students from across the region. The competition requires that students design and build robotic systems to use in challenges mimicking military-inspired missions.

Entering their drone into two challenges designed by the United States' finest special operations forces, Ms. Subba, Mr. Thomas, and Mr. Clare secured two first-place wins. Their hard work as a team and application of their classroom lessons garnered them their victory. This achievement marked the second year in a row a Penn Manor High School team placed in the top two positions.

Mr. Speaker, these brilliant young individuals represent our Nation's next generation of STEM innovators. They serve as inspirations for those around them to pursue opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Their success helps provide recognition for the important role STEM plays in keeping our country safe. I thank them for their ambition and drive to participate in such a program. I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

**RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF MIDWAY, GEORGIA ON ITS CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION**

**HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the City of Midway, Georgia and to honor its centennial celebration which occurred on August 28th.

Midway is located in Liberty County, a name given to the town in remembrance of its citizens, Lyman Hall and Button Gwinnett, who bravely signed their names to the Declaration of Independence, in direct defiance of British rule.

Adding to the town's historical significance, another Midway resident by the name of Nathan Brownson served in the Continental Con-

gress from 1776 to 1778, helping guide our young nation through the turbulent revolutionary years.

Established in 1752, the Midway Congregational Church was destroyed during the Revolutionary War, highlighting the immense sacrifice made by the citizens of Midway in advancing the cause of liberty.

The town is now home to Georgia's only colonial museum and serves as one of the First District's most important cultural landmarks.

I am honored to celebrate the one-hundred-year anniversary of the town's incorporation.

**MOURNING THE TRAGIC SHOOTING AT ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA**

**HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to include in the RECORD the following statement mourning the tragic shooting at Annunciation Catholic Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

SAINT PAUL, Minn.—Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04), Dean of the Minnesota Congressional Delegation, issued the following statement on Wednesday after a gunman opened fire on a mass service during the first week of classes at Annunciation Catholic School, killing two children and wounding 17 others.

"The horrific violence this morning at Annunciation Catholic Church in Minneapolis is heartbreaking. As a mother and grandmother, the tragic shooting of young school children, teachers, staff, and parishioners while they gathered at mass to celebrate the new school year is a tragedy beyond comprehension. The Twin Cities and all of Minnesota grieve alongside the victims and their families. They deserve and have the full support of our community, our state, and our nation.

"The immediate actions of adults, older children, law enforcement, EMTs, and medical personnel saved lives. I commend Governor Walz for acting swiftly and sending the State Patrol and Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to respond to this horrific crime.

"President Trump and Congress have a duty to take action to end this epidemic of gun violence. We cannot once again wait for another tragedy before we enact common sense gun safety laws."

**TRIBUTE TO DR. BEATRICE "BEA" THOMPSON**

**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the extraordinary life and legacy of Dr. Beatrice "Bea" Thompson. For more than five decades, Dr. Thompson has saved her community as an educator, councilwoman, and Executive Director of the Westside Community Center. She is a trailblazer whose commitment to education, equity, and service has uplifted generations and strengthened the very foundation of Anderson.

Born in the Fork Community of Townville, South Carolina, Dr. Thompson was the eighth of nine children in a family that prized honesty, hard work, and education. With the support of her parents, she pursued her dream of becoming an educator. After earning a degree from South Carolina State College, she began teaching at Reed Street High School and later at Westside High School, where she also served as a guidance counselor. Determined to continue her studies, she earned master's degrees from Howard University and Atlanta University and a Ph.D. in school psychology from the University of Georgia. She spent her career with Anderson School District Five as a teacher, guidance counselor, school psychologist, and coordinator of psychological services. She retired in 1999.

In 1976, Dr. Thompson made history as the first African American elected to Anderson City Council, where she continues to serve nearly fifty years later. She went on to hold statewide and national leadership positions, including president of the South Carolina Municipal Association and a Member of the Democratic National Committee. Her work has always focused on improving opportunities for those too often left behind—from redistricting that ensured fair representation to initiatives that improved housing, infrastructure, and education in underserved neighborhoods.

Dr. Thompson's leadership extended to moments of national reckoning. Following the 2014 unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, she created a task force of ministers, community leaders, and law enforcement officials to strengthen relationships between Anderson's African American community and the police. Known as the "Dream Team," this group has received multiple awards for its success in building unity and trust.

Her vision is perhaps most visible at the Westside Community Center, known throughout Anderson as "the haven on the hill." The building was once West Franklin Elementary and had become vacant and neglected after tragedy struck in 1988 with the murder of its principal. Refusing to let it fade into ruin, Dr. Thompson mobilized support and led the transformation of the facility into a vibrant hub that today houses a health clinic, library, therapy center, extension offices, police presence, and the Upstate Fatherhood Coalition. The Center now stands as a symbol of hope and pride for Anderson.

Dr. Thompson's many honors include the Order of the Palmetto, South Carolina's highest civilian award, which reflects the impact of her lifelong service. A city park bears her name, and she was featured in the African American History Calendar as a role model for future generations. She continues to live out the values instilled by her parents: honesty, hard work, and giving the best of oneself to the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in celebrating Dr. Beatrice Thompson—a pioneer, a visionary, and a champion of education and justice. Her legacy is one of service and perseverance, and it will continue to inspire future generations in Anderson and across South Carolina for years to come.

HONORING THE CLINIC DRUG  
STORE, INCORPORATED

**HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the winner of the Georgia Rural Small Business of the Year Award: Clinic Drug Store, Incorporated.

Over the past 97 years, this family-owned and independent business has served the citizens of Sumter County, Georgia across three different businesses, including the Clinic Drug Store, Plains Pharmacy, and Café Campesino Community Coffeehouse.

The businesses have worked hand in hand with The University of Georgia's Small Business Development Center to elevate their services and provide excellent care to rural Georgia.

Three families have owned this business since its establishment: the Mont's, the

Godwin's and presently the Pinnell family, who continue to provide a superior level of service to patients and customers alike.

Their hard work and dedication were recognized by the U.S. Small Business Administration during National Small Business Week back in May of this year, where they received the award in Atlanta.

Today, we congratulate the Clinic Drug Store, Inc. small business of a century of providing service and care to our rural citizens in Georgia, and their recognition by the SBA.