

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF CASA 0101 IN BOYLE HEIGHTS

**HON. JIMMY GOMEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 15, 2025*

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the 25th Anniversary of CASA 0101, located in the community of Boyle Heights.

Since 2000, CASA 0101 has been committed to educating and uplifting the next generation of storytellers in Los Angeles. Under the innovative leadership of its founder Josefina López, CASA 0101 has blossomed into one of the leading arts organizations serving the East side of Los Angeles, hosting theatrical productions, film festivals, and no-cost arts education classes for young Angelenos.

Guided by López's vision to bring live theater programs and the arts to Boyle Heights, the organization has spent the last 25 years cultivating an inclusive space where aspiring artists and storytellers of all backgrounds feel empowered. The impact of CASA 0101's efforts can be seen in their successful track record, with 281 alumni working on a main stage production, 528 youth participating in free classes, and over 12,000 visitors attending a performance at their theater.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring CASA 0101 on their 25th Anniversary.

COMMEMORATING STAFF  
SERGEANT HENRY GERALD GISH

**HON. ANDY BARR**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of a very special patriot, Henry Gerald Gish. A tragic casualty of the Vietnam War, U.S. Air Force Staff Sergeant Jerry Gish's remains were identified by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency on June 23, 2025.

SSgt. Jerry Gish was born in Hershey, Pennsylvania on December 18, 1942, and grew up in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Following high school graduation, SSgt. Gish entered the U.S. Air Force in 1961. He served with Detachment 1, 1043rd Radar Evaluation Squadron. In 1968, SSgt. Gish and 18 other men were assigned to Lima Site 85, a tactical air navigation radar site on a remote 5,600-foot mountain peak called Phou Pha Thi in Houaphan Province in Laos. In the early morning of March 11, 1968, North Vietnamese commandos attacked the site with grenades and mortars. The Americans sought safety on a narrow ledge of the steep mountain. After a few hours, U.S. helicopters were able to rescue eight of the men under the protective cover of A-1 Skyraider aircraft. SSgt. Gish

and ten other Americans were killed in action, and their bodies were unable to be recovered.

From 1994 to 2009, joint teams led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command conducted multiple recovery operations, pursuing witness leads and recovering evidence and remains. In 2023, Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency personnel in Hawaii and members from partner organizations discovered unexploded ordinance, incident-related materials, and possible remains, leading to the identification of an American service member. In 2025, two more excavations were conducted at the site and human remains were recovered. Modern forensic techniques were used to identify SSgt. Gish. He is survived by his wife Doris Eden Gish, daughter Terrie Gish Bayless, and sister Janice Kautz as well as several other family members.

SSgt. Gish is memorialized on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu. His name, and the names of his fallen comrades, are inscribed on the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. After 57 years, the remains of this courageous patriot are being returned home for final rest with full military honors at the Berea Cemetery in Kentucky. I am grateful to the DPAA personnel who worked diligently to recover and identify his remains. I am also grateful to SSgt. Jerry Gish, who gave the ultimate sacrifice when our Nation called. May he never be forgotten and may he rest in eternal peace.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY  
OF JIMMY ALEXANDER

**HON. MICHAEL GUEST**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life and legacy of Mr. Jimmy Alexander of Meridian, Mississippi. Jimmy and his wife, Ann, spent their life together investing in their family and the community of Meridian. As a member of Northcrest Baptist Church since 1986, Jimmy dedicated much of his life to service within the church and the community. He was a leader, mentor, and family man who spent his life serving others.

Jimmy will be most remembered for his contributions as a founding member of The Partnership, which later became the East Mississippi Business Development Corporation, and service on boards of the Meridian Community College Foundation, the Associated Builders & Contractors, the State of Mississippi District Workforce Council, the Mississippi Manufacturers Association, and the State of Mississippi Job Training Coordinating Council.

Jimmy's contributions did not go unnoticed. He was honored with the Ernst and Young Entrepreneurial Award, the Hartley Peavey Award, and numerous other business accolades over the years. For Jimmy, however, the

true measure of success was in the opportunities he created for others including his family, employees whom he considered his family, and the communities that grew stronger because of his vision.

Jimmy's legacy is best summarized in the business he poured his life and soul into. In 1974, alongside his business partner, Henry Burns, he founded A&B Electric Company Inc. It began as a small venture and grew into a remarkable legacy. Through Jimmy's tireless work ethic, steady leadership, and genuine relationships, A&B Electric became the catalyst for the creation of fifteen additional companies in the fields of manufacturing, mechanical, communications, and development. Over the decades, these businesses have collectively employed more than 1,200 people across the Southeast.

Jimmy was a man who believed in doing things the right way—by earning trust, keeping his word, and leading with humility. His legacy lives on in the companies he created, the countless lives he touched, and the family who will carry his memory forward with pride and love. I am honored to memorialize his legacy.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I missed all the votes in the vote series on Monday, September 15, 2025.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 266, final passage of H.R. 3400, the TRAVEL Act; and NAY on Roll Call No. 265, final passage of H.J. RES. 117, On Motion to Table the Motion to Discharge Committee.

### HONORING KATHRYN REXRODE

**HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Kathryn Rexrode and her service and contributions to Virginia's 1st District and the Nation.

Kathryn joined my district team four years ago and has served our office well. Kathryn is a highly motivated individual who was energetic about both her work and her relationships. Her work ethic and commitment to service have helped countless constituents of Virginia's 1st District.

I would like to thank Kathryn 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

● 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.

new challenge, and I look forward to seeing her continued success in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you in joining me to recognize Kathryn Rexrode for her service to Virginia's 1st District and the Nation.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, on September 15, 2025, I missed a recorded vote. Had I been present, on Roll Call No. 266, H.R. 3400, the TRAVEL Act, I would have voted Yea.

#### HONORING CASEY D. YOUNGER, SR.

##### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend an outstanding Mississippian, Mr. Casey D. Younger, Sr., for his exemplary academic achievements, athletic excellence, professional success, and recent induction into the Millsaps College Athletics Hall of Fame.

A native of Vicksburg, Mississippi, Mr. Younger has always demonstrated a commitment to excellence. A proud graduate of Vicksburg High School, he went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Millsaps College in 2008, where he stood out as both a scholar and an athlete. He was named to the Dean's List, served as Chair of the Political Science Club, and received several athletic honors, including selection to the National Football Foundation Hampshire Honor Society, the ESPN The Magazine Academic All-District Team, and NCAA Football All-American honors.

Mr. Younger continued his academic pursuits at the Mississippi College School of Law, earning his Juris Doctor degree in 2012. During his time in law school, he was awarded the Best Paper Award in the Constitutional Law Seminar, the John B. Fareese Trial Advocacy Scholarship, and the prestigious R. Jess Brown Award. He also held leadership roles as Vice President of the Black Law Students Association, Editor of The African American Law School Survival Guide, Chair of the Thurgood Marshall Trial Practice Team, and served as a Star Mentor to his peers.

Today, Mr. Younger is a respected attorney based in Jackson, Mississippi. His primary areas of legal practice include medical malpractice defense, motor vehicle defense, nursing home and long-term care defense, premises liability, products liability, and workers' compensation defense.

His athletic legacy continues to be recognized. In 2021, Mr. Younger was named to the Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference (SCAC) 30th Anniversary Football Team and inducted into the Vicksburg Warren School District's Athletics Hall of Fame. Now, in 2025, Millsaps College has honored him as a member of its Athletics Hall of Fame—a fitting rec-

ognition of his contributions to collegiate athletics and leadership on and off the field.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the remarkable life and accomplishments of M. Casey D. Younger, Sr. He is a shining example of the talent, discipline, and integrity that Mississippi produces and a role model for future generations.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. MARK POCAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for two Roll Call votes on Monday, September 15, 2025. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

NAY on Roll Call No. 265, On Motion to Table the Motion to Discharge Committee of H. Res. 117; and YEA on Roll Call No. 266, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree to H.R. 3400.

#### HONORING HIS ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

##### HON. MICHAEL T. McCaul

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. McCaul. Mr. Speaker, I welcome to Washington His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians and the 270th successor to the Apostle Andrew.

Patriarch Bartholomew has long been a voice for faith, unity, and reconciliation, serving as the head of the second largest single Christian church globally. Along with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's admirable leadership and work within the Orthodox Christian church, his deep commitment to religious freedom, interfaith dialogue, and environmental stewardship was recognized this year with the Templeton Prize. The award is administered by the John Templeton Foundation in collaboration with the Templeton World Charity Foundation and the Templeton Religion Trust. By receiving this internationally recognized honor, he joins a distinguished group of past laureates that includes Mother Teresa, the Dalai Lama, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Beginning with the founding of Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Houston in 1917, this visit is incredibly meaningful to the historic Orthodox Christian community within Texas, as well as Orthodox Christians all across America.

We are grateful for Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's visit to Washington and for his lifelong dedication to bringing together people of different faiths to heed the call for stewardship of creation. I join my Greek Orthodox constituents and people of faith everywhere in offering him a warm welcome.

CONGRATULATING THE 2026 SOUTH DAKOTA TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARDEE

##### HON. DUSTY JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Becky Haenfler of Avon School District, who has been named the 2026 South Dakota Teacher of the Year.

A graduate of University of South Dakota with a master's degree as a reading specialist, Mrs. Haenfler has built a reputation as a teacher who not only educates but also transforms lives. She currently teaches English Language Arts to fifth, sixth, and seventh graders in the very school she once attended, even in the same classroom where she first discovered her love of reading.

For nineteen years, she has created a learning environment filled with energy, curiosity, and high expectations, inspiring students to connect with literature in ways that challenge and motivate them. Her dedication has left a lasting impact on both her students and her community.

As South Dakota Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Haenfler will represent our state in the National Teacher of the Year program in Washington, D.C. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to extend my congratulations on this well-deserved honor and to express gratitude for her remarkable commitment to her students, community and teaching profession.

#### RECOGNIZING, HONORING, AND SUPPORTING THE AMERICAN COVID MEMORIAL

##### HON. ROBERT GARCIA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize, honor and support the American Covid Memorial established by the U.S. Covid-19 Victims & Heroes National Memorial Foundation, as the 65th U.S. National Memorial. The memorial will serve as our Nation's solemn tribute of dignity and reverence to those we lost in the pandemic.

The U.S. Covid-19 pandemic is the deadliest human tragedy to occur in all 250 years of American History, with more than 1.2 million deaths. The scale of this tragedy is almost incomprehensible. Covid killed as many Americans as every war since the foundation of our country combined—twice as many people as the 1918 influenza pandemic and three times as many Americans as died in World War II. These are losses that every person in this country feels deeply, and it is a moment in history that will shape the United States for years to come.

In addition to remembering those we lost, the American Covid Memorial will serve to celebrate the 31 million heroes—16 million medical and 15 million non-medical, essential frontline workers—who bravely and selflessly worked to provide lifesaving healthcare, deliver supplies, and maintain vital community services during the pandemic. Their efforts saved lives and kept our country running.

The first recorded U.S. case of the new Coronavirus was reported January 20, 2020, in a 35-year-old American citizen traveling from Wuhan, China to his home in Snohomish County, Washington State.

On February 6, 2020, 57-year-old Patricia Dowd, a semi-conductor manufacturer in San Jose, California became the first confirmed U.S. Covid-19 death in the United States.

On March 13, 2020, U.S. Presidential Proclamation 9994 was issued declaring the Coronavirus pandemic a National Public Health Emergency.

On February 22, 2021, Proclamation 10148 was issued by the President of the United States recognizing 500,000 Covid-19 deaths, calling on the Nation to conduct a moment of national silence during a candle lighting ceremony at the Lincoln Memorial.

On May 12, 2022, the President of the United States issued Proclamation 10394 marking the tragic milestone of one million American lives lost to Covid-19, stating that "As a Nation, we must not grow numb to such sorrow. To heal, must remember."

On April 11, 2023, the President of the United States signed House Resolution 7—Public Law 118-3, declaring the Covid-19 National Public Health Emergency terminated.

National memorials are an American tradition to commemorate people and events of historical significance and, the Covid-19 pandemic in the United States is an event of profound historical significance. It is in the public interest to establish a National Memorial to remember the lives of those no longer with us and honor the incredible service to our country by heroes working on the front lines.

I ask my fellow Members of Congress and leaders across our country, to join me in supporting the dedication of an American Covid Memorial and to help build the U.S. Covid-19 National Registry of Victims and Heroes to help preserve the memories of the 1.2 million lives we lost.

#### WELCOMING HIS ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

##### HON. HERBERT C. CONAWAY, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Washington, D.C.

Known as the "Patriarch of Peace" by the Eastern Orthodox Church, he guides millions of faithful around the world in their spiritual journey and relationship with God. He has long championed interfaith dialogue, global peace, and religious tolerance. His presence reflects the deep ties between the Orthodox Christian community and the United States. His work has uplifted Eastern Orthodox Christians around the world, including many in New Jersey's 3rd Congressional District.

During this visit, Patriarch Bartholomew is being honored as the recipient of the Templeton Prize. This prestigious international award recognizes his scholarly contributions in exploring the intersection of faith and the natural world. Past recipients include Mother Teresa and the Dalai Lama.

In 1997, he was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of his contributions

to the United States. His efforts have fostered dialogue among Christians, Muslims, Jews, and people of all faiths. His visit reminds us that our Nation is strongest when we work together in mutual respect, despite our differences.

Throughout his ministry, His All-Holiness has exemplified how faith can contribute to a just and peaceful planet. He has unapologetically spoken out against violence, international terrorism, and the degradation of the environment. He once stated, "Human conflict may be inevitable in our world; but war and violence are not. If our age will be remembered, it may be for those who dedicated themselves to the cause of peace." In a time of global Turbulence, his visit marks a moment of deep significance for Orthodox Christians in New Jersey and across the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in welcoming His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to the United States.

#### WELCOMING ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

##### HON. PATRICK RYAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. RYAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople to Washington, D.C. as he receives the Templeton Prize for his lifetime of work curating harmony between science and faith.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew not only serves as the spiritual leader to the upwards of 300 million Orthodox Christians around the globe, he serves as a model for us all, having dedicated his life to peacemaking, environmental advocacy and conservation, and facilitating inter-faith dialogue around the globe.

Leading the Church since 1991, His All-Holiness has shepherded our world through tumultuous shifts in national borders, been instrumental in orchestrating peace between adversaries, and facilitated harmony between religions. Throughout his tenure, he has remained on the forefront of meeting the rising challenges our global community is facing. Be it climate change, wars, violations of human rights, His All-Holiness is undaunted and unwavering in his commitment to alleviating suffering and championing justice.

During this chaotic time in our world, and especially our Nation, the Ecumenical Patriarch's presence in our capital is particularly meaningful and serves as a reminder to us all how to lead with compassion and courage, how to minister to our communities with empathy, and how to live with moral fortitude.

His ability to unify, to guide anyone and everyone to set aside differences and divisions and treat each other as equals is deeply inspiring and is what we should all strive for. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's impact on our world is immeasurable, boundless, and magnified all the more through the countless people he has inspired.

It is a great honor to add my voice to the many, including the Greek Orthodox Christians at St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Kingston, St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Newburgh, Kimisis tis Theotokou Greek Ortho-

dox Church in Poughkeepsie, and across the Hudson Valley, thanking him for his leadership in our world, his zeal for environmentalism and social harmony, and his commitment to uplifting the dignity of every person of every faith and nation.

#### APPRECIATING CHARLIE KIRK

##### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, with the abysmal assassination of American Patriot Charlie Kirk on September 10, 2025, this tragedy inspired South Carolina Poet Tony Pichoff of Hopkins, South Carolina, with his heartfelt poem of Turning Point:

#### TURNING POINT

On this twenty-fourth eve of 9/11,  
One of Satan's minions  
Sent your faithful soul to Heaven.

And in so doing,  
Sowed the seeds  
Of their undoing,  
On the road to reckoning and ruin.

In this epic battle  
For the very soul of America,  
Never yielding  
To the terror of  
Those who seek to silence, you,  
The disarming bearer of  
God's good news.

Wielding intellectual weapons  
Of well reasoned wisdom  
With calm confidence  
And articulate precision

That did mortally threaten  
To undo the institution  
Insidiously dedicated  
To undermining our constitution.

An unholy breeding ground  
Of hatred and division  
Infecting our very youth  
With lies disguised as truth.

Administered via "higher learning's"

Spiritual circumcision.

In obedience to God,

Upon these battle grounds

You bravely trod,

And did not do so in vain.

For even in your very death,

You delivered victory again!

And just as the attack on 9/11

Our national resolve did anoint,

Your MAGA martyrdom

Marks THIS historic turning point.

And when 45 became 47,

Just as certainly as then we knew,

The tide continues to turn in our favor

Now confirmed by you.

As challenging as it may be,

While we mourn we must also see,

That it is through those like you

We shall remain the indomitable land of the Free.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

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

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 265, and YEA on Roll Call No. 266.

HONORING HIS ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW OF CONSTANTINOPLE

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

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and spiritual leader of over 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. I am honored to welcome him to Washington, D.C.

Born Demetrios Arhondonis in 1940 on the island of modern-day Gökçeada, Turkey, His All-Holiness Bartholomew was elected in October 1991 as the 270th successor to the Apostle Andrew, who founded the Church of Constantinople nearly 2,000 years ago. His formal office is the Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch, a historic title dating to the sixth century.

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew studied theology around the world, including at esteemed schools in Turkey, Italy, Germany, Greece, and Switzerland. His doctoral dissertation, submitted to the University of Athens, was in the field of Canon Law, and he was a founding member of the Society of Canon Law of the Oriental Churches. For nearly three decades, His All-Holiness served the Church in many capacities, from his ordination as a deacon in 1961 and priest in 1969, to Assistant Dean at the Theological School of Halki, Metropolitan of Philadelphia, and later Metropolitan of Chalcedon, before becoming Patriarch.

He has received dozens of honorary doctorates from leading universities around the globe, including Georgetown, Yale, Athens, Thessaloniki, Louvain, and Moscow, and is fluent in multiple languages.

As the primary spiritual leader of the Orthodox Christian world and a transnational figure, the Ecumenical Patriarch has exceeded the traditional scope of his office. His All-Holiness advocated for Christian unity, participating in meetings with numerous Church and State dignitaries, addressing national parliaments, and speaking to the European Parliament, the United Nations, UNESCO, and the World Economic Forum. He has led and contributed to reconciliation efforts between Christian Churches through theological dialogues, bilateral consultations, and personal encounters to address issues of common concern.

Furthermore, his faith-led work has led to international meetings and theological conversations with Muslim and Jewish leaders to promote interfaith tolerance on a global level.

He has convened historic synaxes of Orthodox Primates and presided over the 2016 Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, the first such gathering in over a millennium. He restored the independence of churches long suppressed under persecution and, in 2019, granted autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

Through his vision, courage, and devotion, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has led as a beacon of faith, unity, peace, and reconciliation in our time.

HONORING THE DOMTAR MARLBORO MILL

**HON. RUSSELL FRY**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. FRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Domtar Marlboro Mill in Bennettsville, South Carolina, which since 1990 has been a cornerstone of economic growth, innovation, and community service.

As the last greenfield paper mill built in the United States, it employs more than 300 workers, contributes over \$800 million annually to the regional economy, and produces essential paper and pulp products used across the Nation.

The mill has earned recognition for its commitment to safety, efficiency, and responsible forestry, while also investing in Marlboro County through scholarships, service projects, and support for local organization.

The Marlboro Mill stands as a source of pride for South Carolina's 7th District, and I commend its workforce and leadership for their lasting contributions to our state and country.

RECOGNIZING THE SPIRITUAL HEAD, ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Spiritual Head and leader of the second largest Christian Church in the world. His All-Holiness is visiting Washington, D.C. in conjunction with his acceptance of the distinguished Templeton Prize in New York City—an honor previously bestowed on Mother Teresa, the Dalai Lama, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, among others. While here, he will visit both the White House and the Congress.

Elected in October 1991 as the 270th Archbishop of the 2,000-year-old Church founded by the Apostle Andrew, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew is the spiritual leader of 250 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. He is also a leading figure in the dialogues among the Abrahamic Faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—and his presence in our Nation's capital is an opportunity to highlight the positive role religious leaders of his stature bring to the cause of peace and religious liberty.

The true peacemakers of history not only sought to reduce conflict but also showed compassion toward those who persecuted them. Patriarch Bartholomew fits that definition precisely. Despite facing harassment by foreign governments and attacks by extremists, he has remained steadfast in his mission to promote reconciliation, environmental stewardship, and human dignity.

His contributions have been recognized around the globe. In 1997, he was awarded the Gold Medal of the United States Congress. The Guardian identified him as one of the world's foremost leaders in raising environmental awareness. And Time Magazine, in its

category of Leaders and Revolutionaries, named him one of the world's most influential people.

Mr. Speaker, as we welcome His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Washington, D.C., let us also celebrate his unwavering commitment to interfaith dialogue, peace, and religious liberty. His leadership serves as a reminder of the power of faith to unite people across nations and traditions.

COMMEMORATING THE VISIT OF PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

**HON. ANDY HARRIS**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. HARRIS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Head of the second largest Christian Church in the world, Orthodox Christianity.

Patriarch Bartholomew will be in Washington, D.C. to visit both the White House and Congress. His All-Holiness will then travel to New York City to accept the distinguished Templeton Prize, which "celebrates pioneers of scientific and spiritual insight for their contributions to human well-being and spiritual prosperity."

I would like to thank Patriarch Bartholomew for his spiritual work and wish His All-Holiness the best of luck in continuing to serve as a model for the Orthodox Christian community of Maryland's 1st Congressional District.

RECOGNIZING THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

**HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor The Pew Charitable Trusts, an incredible organization that is focused on improving and invigorating civic life. Founded in 1948, The Pew Charitable Trusts has been advancing solutions to societal challenges for 77 years, and I know that the Philadelphia community has benefited immensely from this important work.

Founder Joseph Newton Pew and his wife, Mary Anderson Pew initially focused their philanthropic work on anonymously providing grants to priorities such as cancer research, the Red Cross, and a pioneering project to assist historically Black colleges. Over the years, this institution has evolved into a much more expansive enterprise, allowing flexibility to engage in a variety of community issues and inform the public on responsible governance.

A tireless champion for social good, The Pew Charitable Trust has remained committed to the civic life of Philadelphia and the importance of an informed democracy. This endeavor, inspired by Joseph Newton Pew's vision, stands as a testament to this organization's enduring impact on our city.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of their unwavering commitment to serving others, we honor The Pew Charitable Trust.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY  
OF HERMAN BLACKMON, SR.

## HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Herman Blackmon, Sr., an extraordinary man whose service, intellect, and compassion enriched the Bay Area and beyond.

Born in Houston, Texas, Herman spent his early years there before serving three years in the United States Air Force. Following his military service, he made the Bay Area his home, earning a Bachelor's degree in Economics and a Master's in Business Administration from the University of California at Berkeley.

In the late 1990's, Herman served as both council member and mayor of Hercules, California. His leadership was defined by tireless dedication to his community, championing Capital Improvement Programs and advocating for equitable educational opportunities for economically disadvantaged students. As managing partner of his family-owned business, Amanco, Inc., he was instrumental in the rebuilding of several West Contra Costa Unified School District campuses, including Coronado, Riverside, Sheldon Elementary, and Pinole Middle School.

Herman's professional career also included 13 years with Pacific Bell. Yet, beyond his many accomplishments, he was a man of diverse passions—an avid reader, skilled mechanic, and enthusiastic player of dominoes and pinochle. Above all, he cherished time spent with his grandchildren; Jhana, Mark, Aleah, Charles-Justin, Langston, Levi, and Winter.

Herman is preceded in death by his beloved wife of 54 years, Peggy, and is survived by his sons Herman, Jr., and Marcus, his seven grandchildren, and a wide circle of friends and neighbors whose lives he touched through his good deeds.

Herman Blackmon, Sr. leaves behind a profound legacy of public service, civic leadership, and devotion to family. His impact will be felt for generations, I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to Mr. Blackmon's loved ones. I know they and the people of Contra Costa County will join me in celebrating his life and legacy.

## HONORING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BROAD IN DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

## HON. JIMMY GOMEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the 10th Anniversary of The Broad in Downtown Los Angeles.

Since 2015, The Broad has expanded public access to a diverse collection of contemporary art for Angelinos and visitors from around the globe. Founded by philanthropists Edythe and Eli Broad, the museum offers free general admission to all visitors so they can explore their collection of more than 2,000 pieces of art and gain a newfound appreciation for modern art-work.

Through its permanent and special exhibitions, The Broad has remained committed to uplifting the voices of artists of unique and diverse backgrounds, such as Jean-Michel Basquiat, Takashi Murakami and Julie Mehretu. The museum's commitment extends to its Diversity Apprenticeship Program, where the museum prepares its participants with the knowledge and experience they need to pursue a profession in the arts.

As part of The Broad's mission to increase access to contemporary art, the museum also hosts The Broad Art Foundation, an innovative lending library which has loaned artwork to museums worldwide over 9,000 times. The library seeks to build strong relationships with fellow institutions built on a shared appreciation for the arts that allows them to share their resources and continue expanding access to meaningful artwork.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 10th Anniversary of The Broad.

WELCOMING HIS ALL-HOLINESS  
BARTHOLOMEW I OF CONSTANTINOPLE TO THE UNITED STATES

## HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, this week, the United States Congress and our Nation's capital will be honored with a visit from the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All-Holiness Bartholomew I. Patriarch Bartholomew is not only the denominational leader of 300 million Eastern Orthodox Christians worldwide—he is a global spiritual leader who has advanced the sacred causes of peace, interreligious understanding and environmental stewardship.

Patriarch Bartholomew is stopping in Washington, D.C. on his way to New York City to accept the Templeton Prize for his groundbreaking harmonization of faith and science in service of environmental protection. The Templeton Prize, given to singular champions of human dignity and progress such as Mother Teresa and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, honors people who have harnessed the power of the sciences to explore the deepest questions of the universe and humankind's place and purpose within it. His All-Holiness Bartholomew has earned this storied honor through the same works that gained him the moniker of the "Green Patriarch." Since assuming his office in 1991, Patriarch Bartholomew has convened leaders across borders and disciplines to redefine human-caused climate change, environmental destruction and pollution as not just practical crises but spiritual and moral failings. He does so because of his conviction that "we are not owners of this planet. It belongs to the coming generations as well. We are simply stewards and priests of the environment and not proprietors of it."

In addition to his environmental stewardship, Patriarch Bartholomew finds common cause with Americans in advancing the causes of democracy and peace. He assumed the Patriarchate of Constantinople during the same year that the Soviet Union dissolved. His leadership was instrumental in advancing the spir-

itual and political self-determination of the Eastern Orthodox faithful in former Soviet republics. Today, he is a steadfast and unflinching moral leader supporting the people of Ukraine as they resist Vladimir Putin's bloody imperialist invasion and a forceful counterweight to the Moscow Patriarchate's Putinist subversion. This is a cause that most Americans support, recognizing that the cause of the people of Ukraine and their war of self-defense and self-determination is now the cause of all humanity.

During this time of great uncertainty and fear, we Americans would do well to learn from Patriarch Bartholomew's example. Over the past 36 years, Patriarch Bartholomew has sought to build relationships across faith traditions, cultures and borders. In 1997, Patriarch Bartholomew was the first Eastern Orthodox Patriarch to denounce the great horror and evil of the Holocaust. He has traveled to Muslim-majority countries to foster interreligious understanding. And he has taken great care to cultivate relationships with Roman Catholic Popes and leaders across the world. These examples of moral and spiritual bridge-building are essential to our own democratic and human progress as a multi-religious, pluralist democracy.

Twenty-eight years ago, the U.S. Congress recognized Patriarch Bartholomew with the Congressional Gold Medal for his extraordinary and courageous leadership. Today, on behalf of my constituents in Maryland's beautiful 8th District, I welcome Patriarch Bartholomew back to our Nation's Capital and congratulate him on earning the Templeton Prize as the latest of many well-deserved honors.

## RECOGNIZING EMMA WEIR

## HON. BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to recognize and express my deep appreciation and gratitude to Emma Weir, who served as Communications Director and Senior Advisor for the New Democrat Coalition over the past 4 years.

Emma has been an extraordinary part of our team—bringing not only her sharp communication skills and strategic insight but also her kindness, dedication, and unwavering passion for public service. Her excellent work has helped shape our message, build connections, grow the New Dem brand, and advance the values we hold dear. As a communicator, Emma is second to none.

As Chair of the New Democrat Coalition, and before that Vice Chair for Communications, I have worked hand-in-hand with Emma to find new ways to address the challenges facing our country, adapting to a constantly evolving media environment to connect with the American people and earn their trust. Emma's hard work has ensured every New Dem Member and their staff has the tools, knowledge, and resources they need to succeed. As she starts her next chapter, Emma should know she has made an indelible mark on our Members and the Coalition.

While we will deeply miss her at New Dems, I am so proud and excited to see her step into

a new opportunity with Chairman PETE AGUILAR and the House Democratic Caucus. I have no doubt Emma will bring the same compassion, professionalism, and excellence to the House Democratic Caucus that made her so effective with the New Dems.

Emma's tenure with the New Dems has been—by any measure—an immense success. As she departs, Emma leaves behind a strong New Dem brand and media presence that will continue to grow atop the foundations she worked so hard to establish. Though we are sad to see her go, the Coalition, our leadership team, and I, wish Emma all the best. We look forward to working with her in her new capacity to move our country forward and deliver results for the American people.

**HONORING ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW**

**HON. NORMA J. TORRES**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mrs. TORRES of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to our Nation's Capital, and to honor him for his contributions to the Greek Orthodox community in the Inland Empire and beyond.

In 1940, All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was born on an island called Imvros, which is located in modern-day Turkey. He completed his elementary and secondary education in both Imvros and Istanbul. For his undergraduate degree, he attended the historic Theological School of Halki, and for his graduate studies, he attended the Pontifical Oriental Institute of the Gregorian University in Rome, the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, and the University of Munich. He completed his doctoral dissertation on the topic of Canon Law.

In 1961, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was ordained to the Diaconate, and in 1969, he was ordained to the Priesthood. During this time, he served as the Assistant Dean for the Theological School of Halki, then as the Personal Secretary for the late Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios, before being elected as Metropolitan of Philadelphia and subsequently Metropolitan of Chalcedon.

The Ecumenical Patriarch was elected in October 1991 as the 270th Archbishop of the 2000-year-old Orthodox Church. His office is a historic title dating to the sixth century—Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch. At 85 years old, he is the longest-serving Archbishop of Constantinople and leads more than 300 million congregation members nationwide. I am proud that one of those congregations, Saint Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church, is part of my congressional district in Upland, California.

The Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has used his influence to travel to every continent, where he has taken an active role in the World Council of Churches, addressed both the European Parliament and U.S. Congress, met with heads of state, and visited Orthodox churches in various countries. He has advanced diplomatic relations between Christianity, Islam, and Judaism internationally by co-sponsoring international peace conferences centered on racism and extremism. He has

also supported traditionally Orthodox countries emerging from decades of wide-scale religious persecution, facilitated conversations with Muslim and Jewish leaders to promote mutual respect and religious tolerance, and has traveled to Muslim countries rarely visited by Christian leaders.

The Ecumenical Patriarch is a champion for environmental advocacy, introducing environmental issues in his sermons, which has earned him the nickname the "Green Patriarch." He has used his impact to found several major conventions, including a global bishop assembly that has met regularly since 1992, the inaugural Synaxis (assembly) of Orthodox Primates, the Clergy-Laity Congress, and the World Youth Conference of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The Ecumenical Patriarch has received many awards, including the Congressional Gold Medal of the United States Congress in 1997, and has numerous honorary doctorates from institutions worldwide, including Georgetown University, Yale University, and several other international institutions.

I warmly welcome Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew as he visits Washington, D.C., following his acceptance of the Templeton Prize—honoring those who have made significant contributions in the fields of Religion and Science. His service to our community and beyond is worthy of the highest recognition.

**HONORING MS. CYNTHIA LEE'S RETIREMENT FROM FEDERAL SERVICES**

**HON. EUGENE SIMON VINDMAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. VINDMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Ms. Cynthia Lee for her remarkable 44 years of federal service with the Department of the Army.

Ms. Lee began her journey at Virginia State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. She then went on to pursue a Master of Science in Contract and Acquisition Management from the Florida Institute of Technology, laying the academic foundation for a career that would span more than 4 decades.

At the age of 18, Ms. Lee began her career as a student hire. From those early days, she demonstrated exceptional leadership, rising through the ranks to become a well-respected leader.

Over the course of her career, Ms. Lee's contributions have left a lasting impact on both her peers and the entire federal workforce in her role as Program Manager of Small Business Programs within the Department of the Army.

In recognition for her exceptional performance, Ms. Lee has received numerous awards that reflect her commitment and dedication. As Resource Management Chief, she was commended for her service as Acting Deputy Commander from May 2021 to January 2022, a role in which she displayed exceptional professionalism.

I want to personally thank Ms. Lee for her decades of service. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Lee for her 44 years of outstanding federal service. We

are deeply grateful for her dedication, her leadership, and her invaluable contributions to our Nation.

**WELCOMING ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE, HIS ALL-HOLINESS BARTHOLOMEW'S 2025 VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES**

**HON. DARRELL ISSA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend a warm welcome to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All-Holiness Bartholomew, the spiritual leader and "First Among Equals" of more than 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. During this historic visit to the United States, His All-Holiness will receive the Templeton Prize—the world's most prestigious award in Religion and Science.

Patriarch Bartholomew's efforts to promote religious freedom and human rights and his initiatives to advance religious tolerance among the world's religions, together with his work toward international peace and environmental protection, have justly placed him at the forefront of global visionaries as an apostle of love, peace, and reconciliation.

We are privileged to host the longest-serving Archbishop of Constantinople in history here in our Nation's Capital, as he meets with the President, Secretary of State, and Congress. His visit to the United States serves as a testament to his unwavering commitment to fostering mutual respect and religious tolerance on a global level.

I look forward to the opportunity to welcome His All-Holiness and express our collective gratitude for his continued leadership and dedication to the cause of peace and religious liberty. In the words of His All-Holiness: "If our age will be remembered, it may be for those who dedicated themselves to the cause of peace."

**RECOGNIZING THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF DIXIE DEMUTH**

**HON. MORGAN McGARVEY**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. McGARVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the legacy and remarkable life of a Louisville hometown hero, Dixie Demuth, who fought for equality for women in Kentucky and left a permanent mark on our city and commonwealth.

Born in 1917 in the famous Samuels House in Samuels, Kentucky, Dixie moved to Louisville with her mother in 1933 at the height of the Great Depression. From an early age, she worked in restaurants and bars, learning the trade in popular downtown spots until she opened her own place on 5th Street in Louisville. She called it Dixie's Elbow Room. Although Dixie was allowed to own and run a bar, a two-hundred-year-old Kentucky law prohibited women from working as bartenders or even sitting at bars. Dixie decided that just

wasn't right, and, in 1968, she hired her very first woman bartender and served a woman seated at her bar—her own adult daughter, in fact.

The Kentucky Alcohol Beverage Control Board came down hard and fast, incensed not only that she was breaking the law but also that she openly advertised her rulebreaking in the hope that other bar owners would join her fight, but no one did. Though the ABC shut her down and took her liquor license, Dixie did not give up the fight. Found guilty of violating the antiquated state law, Dixie appealed her sentence and brought her case to the Kentucky Court of Appeals, who decided in her favor in 1972, calling the law "invidious and arbitrary." Her quiet revolution behind the counter became a landmark victory for women's rights in the commonwealth and across the country.

At 100 years old, when asked why she decided to take her bold stand, Dixie remembered: "I said this is ridiculous, I'm going to change that, so I did." Dixie died in 2020 at the age of 102, but her legacy lives on. In 2023, she was inducted into the Kentucky Bourbon Hall of Fame, which recognizes sacrifice and determination in the bourbon industry. Louisville Mayor Craig Greenberg recently unveiled a new historical marker, part of the Louisville Metro Historical Marker Program, placed where her bar once stood, ensuring that future generations will learn about Dixie's fight and victory.

As a co-chair of the Congressional Bourbon Caucus, and as a proud son of Louisville, I am grateful for the path Dixie paved for the bourbon industry and the many women who work in it. Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life and legacy of Dixie Demuth, as well as to celebrate the unveiling of the historical marker that enshrines her in our city's history.

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**RECOGNIZING HIS ALL-HOLINESS BARTHOLOMEW, ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE AND ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH**

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**HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of His All-Holiness Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch, as he visits the United States to receive the Templeton Prize.

Born Demetrios Arhondis on the island of Imvros, known today as Gökçeada, Turkey, Patriarch Bartholomew was elected the 270th Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch in October 1991. Today he leads a community of 300 million Orthodox Christians and is the longest serving archbishop in the church's 2,000-year history. Patriarch Bartholomew pursued theological studies in Istanbul, Rome, Switzerland, Germany, and Greece, earning a doctorate in Canon law. Recognized for his scholarship and global perspective, he has received honorary doctorates from leading institutions across the world.

Throughout his time as Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew has worked to build unity among the Christian churches and foster meaningful dialogue between world religions.

He has convened many international conferences, bringing together religious leaders from across the globe to promote coexistence and tolerance. Known as the "Green Patriarch," Patriarch Bartholomew has brought significant attention to ecological concerns, organizing global, interfaith symposia on climate change and ecological responsibility. For his environmental leadership, he has received numerous awards and international recognition.

Patriarch Bartholomew has addressed the United Nations, the European Parliament, and the World Economic Forum, earning accolades from around the world. In recognition of his global contributions, he received the Congressional Gold Medal in 1997. In September 2025, Patriarch Bartholomew will travel to the U.S. to receive the Templeton Prize, one of the most prestigious awards recognizing those who use the power of science to explore the deepest questions of the universe and humankind's place and purpose within it. Previous recipients include St. Teresa of Kolkata and the Dalai Lama.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to celebrate the work of His All-Holiness Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch, and I ask that my colleagues join me in welcoming him to Washington, D.C. and thanking him for his ongoing commitment to advancing peace and religious freedom.

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**RECOGNIZING TESS KUENNING**

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**HON. CHRIS PAPPAS**

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Tess Kuenning, president and CEO of Bi-State Primary Care Association. Her community-based approach to public health and exceptional leadership have significantly improved both the quality and accessibility of health care in New Hampshire, Vermont, and the rest of the country.

Tess has dedicated her entire career to improving public health. After earning her Master's in Nursing and Public/Community Health in 1990, she worked in Nepal as a Peace Corps nurse for five years. There, Tess taught women to be birth attendants and designed sustainable maternal and child health programs. While Tess loved working one-on-one with patients and clinicians, she wanted to expand her impact to the community level, pushing her to transition to public health. After returning to the United States, she worked for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as the principal public health advisor throughout New England and as a nurse consultant for the Health Care Finance Administration.

For the past thirty years, Tess has led Bi-State Primary Care Association, which advocates for Community Health Centers in New Hampshire and Vermont. Community Health Centers play a crucial role in delivering primary care, especially in areas where medical services are limited or unaffordable. Offering accessible, preventive, and routine care, they serve as a vital lifeline for low and moderate-income families who might otherwise go without essential health services. As president and CEO of Bi-State PCA, Tess has been instrumental in leveraging her clinical background,

experience in public health, and many connections to stakeholders, nonprofits, and Congressional Offices like my own to uplift community health centers in our state. Under her leadership, Bi-State has grown from a staff of 6 to over 20 and now serves over 312,000 patients across New Hampshire and Vermont.

I have had the pleasure of meeting with Tess multiple times over the past few years, and I am always inspired by her determination, creativity, positivity, and genuine passion for community health. I am so grateful to Tess for sharing her experience and knowledge with me and other Members of Congress, helping us improve our healthcare system. Tess is a true leader and public servant, and I want to acknowledge the profound positive impact she has had on community health in her community.

On behalf of my constituents in New Hampshire's 1st Congressional District, I thank Tess Kuenning for her selflessness and dedication to the patients she serves. Her dedication to advocating for community health centers has improved healthcare in our state and has made her community a better place. Tess's work has brought us one step closer to ensuring that health care is a right, not a privilege, for all. I wish her all the best in the years to come.

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**INTRODUCTION OF THE BILLIONAIRE INCOME TAX ACT AND NOTING THE POPE'S CONCERN ON INCOME INEQUALITY**

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**HON. STEVE COHEN**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I plan to introduce the Billionaire Income Tax Act on Wednesday and will hold a press conference with the House cosponsor Congressman DON BEYER and the Senate bill sponsor RON WYDEN.

It is an effort to establish a level of fairness in federal income taxation and prevent millionaires and billionaires, and the aspiring trillionaire, Elon Musk, from taking advantage of the tax code to pay what, for them is pocket change. I have not asked him, but it looks like Pope Leo would endorse the Billionaire Income Tax Act. He recently did an interview with a biographer and excerpts were released on Sunday. Speaking of societal polarization, he said it is in part caused by income inequality. One factor, he said, and I'm quoting him, is "the continuously wider gap between the income levels of the working class and the money that the wealthiest receive. For example, CEOs that 60 years ago might have been making four to six times more than what the workers are receiving, the last figure I saw, it's 600 times more than what average workers are receiving. Yesterday the said news that Elon Musk is going to be the first trillionaire in the world. What does that mean and what's that about? If that is the only thing that has value anymore, then we're in big trouble." I agree with Pope Leo and hope our bill will have a significant effect on what everyone seems to acknowledge is a huge and growing problem.

WELCOMING HIS ALL-HOLINESS, ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, it is an extraordinary honor to welcome His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, to Washington, D.C. We are grateful to receive not only the spiritual leader of more than 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide, but also a man whose life and ministry have embodied courage, compassion, and an unshakable commitment to peace and human dignity.

He was born Demetrios Arhonditis in 1940 on the island of Imvros in Turkey—most inhabitants of Imvros were Greek until the 1960's, when the Turkish government forced them to emigrate. In 1970, the Turkish government officially renamed Imvros to Gökçeada. Thus, Patriarch Bartholomew's journey has been marked from its earliest days by faith and perseverance in the face of religious persecution and nationalistic intolerance. Educated at the Theological School of Halki and later in Rome, Munich, and Switzerland, he distinguished himself in the fields of theology and canon law, becoming a respected scholar even before his ordination. In October 1991, he was elected the 270th Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch, assuming the role of "first among equals" in the ancient Patriarchate founded by the Apostle Andrew.

Since that time, His All-Holiness has been called many things: the "Patriarch of Peace," the "Green Patriarch," and, above all, a bridge builder. For more than three decades, he has labored under extraordinary difficulties. In a region where the Orthodox community has suffered harassment and intimidation by Islamic extremists, he has stood steadfast, not only defending the faithful, but offering reconciliation to their adversaries. He has endured hostility, threats, and attempts to silence his office, yet his response has always been guided by the Christian virtues of forgiveness, humility, and love.

His All-Holiness has taken that witness far beyond the walls of the Patriarchate in Constantinople. He has convened dialogues among Christians, Muslims, and Jews, creating unprecedented opportunities for mutual understanding in the Middle East, one of the world's most divided regions, and beyond. From Libya to Syria, from Egypt to Azerbaijan, he has sought not confrontation, but instead "a dialogue of loving truth."

Mr. Speaker, His All-Holiness is not only a voice of principle, but a leader of action. He presided over the historic Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church in Crete in 2016, granted autocephaly to the Church of Ukraine in 2019, and continues to strengthen unity within the Orthodox world while opening channels of dialogue with the Catholic Church and other Christian traditions. His leadership is defined not by power or coercion, but by example—the examples of service, sacrifice, and fidelity to Christ's command to love our neighbor as ourselves.

As we welcome him, we are mindful that the challenges he faces are immense. Religious

freedom is often denied to Orthodox Christians—and under constraint in many of the lands they have inhabited for centuries. Christians and other minorities in many regions still face persecution.

I thank His All-Holiness for his witness, courage, and example. Washington welcomes him, not only as a guest, but as a brother, a teacher, and a peacemaker. May his visit strengthen the bonds between our peoples, and may his ministry continue to inspire us all to walk humbly, act justly, and love mercifully in the service of God and one another.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF KATHY LUKE

**HON. MICHAEL GUEST**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Mrs. Kathy Chester Luke of Philadelphia, Mississippi. Mrs. Luke spent most of her life living in Philadelphia with her husband, Bob Luke, and always considered it home. Kathy was a devoted teacher who poured patience, encouragement, and a belief that the children she encountered would help shape a better future for their families and communities into every student who entered the doors of her classroom. The love Kathy showed to her students was a small glimpse into the selfless matriarch her family remembers her to be. Nothing brought Kathy more joy than seeing all her family gathered in one room. She loved to decorate for the holidays, travel with her husband, and play mahjong weekly with her friends.

Kathy's time as an educator impacted countless lives as she served as a selfless pillar of strength to her students and coworkers. Her life and legacy are forever marked with generosity, wisdom, and a deep love for others. I am honored to remember her legacy here today.

HONORING HALLIE COYNE

**HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Hallie Coyne and her service and contributions to Virginia's 1st District and the Nation.

Hallie joined my office in 2022 and quickly became one of the most effective and recognized personal office defense staffers in the House. As my National Security Advisor, Hallie has spearheaded numerous legislative efforts that delivered tangible results to the constituents of my district, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the country. Among her many accomplishments, Hallie spearheaded efforts to bolster the shipbuilding ecosystem in Virginia, strengthen commercial space launch infrastructure, bridge the gap between new defense start-ups and the Pentagon, and was a champion of defense technology and innovation.

Hallie has served as a mentor and leader for my legislative staff and the entire office, sharing her expertise and experience with the rest of my team. Her counsel and guidance have shaped my staff into the most effective and successful team on Capitol Hill.

I would like to thank Hallie for her many contributions and dedicated service over the last three and a half years. She is thorough, a true team player, and a spark in my office that will be dearly missed. Hallie 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.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you in joining me to recognize Hallie Coyne for her service to Virginia's 1st District and the Nation.

HONORING STABLE RECOVERY

**HON. ANDY BARR**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Suicide Prevention Month, I rise to honor Stable Recovery for their work around mental health, suicide, and addiction. Stable Recovery is a small, peer-driven, equine-focused rehabilitation program located in Kentucky. This program was launched on Taylor Made Farm in 2022 by co-founders Frank Taylor and Christian Countzler. Their vision was simple but powerful: to help individuals find strength and healing through the power of the horse, the principles of 12-step recovery, and the dignity of meaningful work.

The School of Horsemanship, created by Frank Taylor and built on decades of horsemanship knowledge, provides a 90-day residential program for education and healing. Residents find structure, discipline, and purpose as they learn equine care, farm work, financial independence and participate in daily therapy, support groups, and 12-step instruction. The goal was to not only allow residents to thrive and learn in recovery but to provide a natural employment pathway to jobs in the equine industry, an industry that needs more skilled talent.

The horse industry has been extraordinarily supportive. In just three short years, Stable Recovery has already seen lives transformed and exceptional growth. They credit their success to evidence based clinical practices, consistency of the program, mentorship, community and the healing power of horses. The men and women that have completed the program have reached milestones of sobriety. Many now live in recovery while working in the

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I missed all the votes in the vote series on September 8, 2025. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 241, final passage of H.R. 3425, the POST Act; and YEA on Roll Call No. 240, final passage of H.R. 3424, the SPACE Act.

equine industry. Stable Recovery's metrics exceed national norms. As of today, 80 percent of Stable Recovery's legacy graduates remain sober and are employed in the equine industry. Generous individuals and organizations, like HISA and Jockeys' Guild, believe in their mission. Their support has given residents a chance to recover at Taylor Made Farm and strategic partners have provided stable employment, allowing graduates to build lives of independence and purpose.

I am honored to recognize the work of Stable Recovery as we consider their incredible work for our community and what more can be done to prevent suicide in our Nation. We can heal people through horses, and in the process, create better lives, stronger families, and the opportunity of a bright future.

HONORING JOSEFINA LÓPEZ ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF CASA 0101 IN BOYLE HEIGHTS

**HON. JIMMY GOMEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Josefina López, a playwright, artistic director, and community leader.

The daughter of a bracero, Josefina López immigrated to the United States from Mexico at the age of 5. Her family settled in Boyle Heights, where López grew up as an undocumented individual for 13 years until she was granted amnesty. López's experience as a Mexican, undocumented woman is what inspired her to write her acclaimed play *Real Women Have Curves*.

The play, which was later adapted into a film, is based on López's lived experience jug-

ging her family's expectations to work at their sewing factory, her dream of pursuing an education in New York, and the ever-present fear of immigration authorities entering their communities. Along with her other works, López has had over 100 productions of her plays performed in the United States.

At the start of her writing career, López was often the sole woman of color in the room, inspiring her to create a path for Latinos like herself to achieve success in the arts. In 2000, López founded CASA 0101 to, make this dream a reality by bringing theater and arts programs to the community she grew up in. For the last 25 years, the organization has produced hundreds of plays, provided free arts classes for young Angelenos, and supported the next generation of storytellers and artists. The impact of López's work can be felt from Boyle Heights to Broadway.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Josefina López.

WELCOMING ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

**HON. SUMMER L. LEE**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and spiritual leader of more than 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide, to Washington, D.C.

This week, His All-Holiness is visiting our Nation's Capital to receive the Templeton Prize, the most prestigious international award in religion and science. With this honor, he joins the ranks of Mother Teresa, Archbishop

Desmond Tutu, and the Dalai Lama. The recognition reflects not only his scholarship and spiritual leadership but his unwavering witness for peace, human dignity, and care for creation.

For more than three decades as Ecumenical Patriarch, His All-Holiness has been a global voice for reconciliation among peoples of different faiths and traditions. He has also been one of the first religious leaders to insist that harming the environment is not simply a failure of policy but a moral failing. His leadership reminds us that stewardship of our planet is inseparable from justice for our communities.

His leadership has been honored across the world. In 1997, he received the Congressional Gold Medal here in the United States, and he has been recognized internationally as one of the most influential figures of our time. Yet the true measure of his ministry lies not in awards, but in his call for peace over division, compassion over violence, and responsibility over indifference. As he has said, "We have it in our power either to increase the hurt inflicted on our world or to contribute toward its healing. The choice is ours."

His life's work reminds us that building a better world depends on moral courage, the same courage we need to meet our own fights for justice at home.

The people of Pennsylvania's 12th District, including the faithful of the Presentation of Christ Greek Orthodox Church in East Pittsburgh and St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Pittsburgh, are proud to share in this welcome.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the extraordinary ministry of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and in congratulating him on this well-deserved honor.