

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING PAUL JONES

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Paul Jones, a World War II Veteran in Corbin, Kentucky, who recently celebrated his 103rd birthday.

Paul Jones earned the distinguished role as a U.S. Navy Pilot, after being trained by one of his Major League Baseball idols. Ted Williams became Jones' naval pilot trainer when his career as a legendary left fielder for the Boston Red Sox was placed on hold for military service. Growing up in Corbin, Kentucky, Jones played baseball for his local Appalachian coal camp team. He quickly became a fan of Williams who earned a .344 batting average with 521 home runs over his 19-year baseball career. It was their common love of baseball and courage of conviction to serve their country that led them to the same path at the Naval Pilot Training field in Pensacola, Florida. When Williams found out Jones was from Eastern Kentucky, he nicknamed him "Briar," and gave him the opportunity to play catch with him and other members of the Pensacola Naval Base baseball team.

It was Williams' expert pilot training that prepared Jones to fly F6F Hellcat fighter planes, taking off from the carrier deck of the USS *Guadalcanal*. Jones was honorably discharged from the Navy in 1945 without having to face combat, and returned home to play on Corbin's L&N Railroad baseball team, the "Railroaders." In 1946, he was named to the Kentucky All-State Team at second base.

In addition to his passion for baseball and the U.S. Navy, he fell in love with Shirley Wallen Jones, a local healthcare professional in Corbin with whom he shared 55 years of marriage. Jones managed his family-owned furniture store, joined local civic activities, and joined the Navy Reserves. His zeal for flying led him to purchase a small Cessna 182 that he used to help transfer decommissioned Navy planes. Jones then committed to flying jets for the Navy Reserve from 1955 to 1959 and continued his military service for more than 20 years.

At the age of 82, he finally stopped flying his plane, but at the age of 103, he's still driving his car, walking on the treadmill, going to watch Cincinnati Reds ballgames with friends, and enjoying local sporting events and local restaurants.

Out of the 16.4 million Americans who served this great Nation during World War II, only about 45,000 of our heroes are left in 2025. We owe a great debt of gratitude for Paul Jones' remarkable life of service as a business operator in Corbin, a civic leader and a pilot for the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserves. His legacy demonstrates the utmost patriotism, while living the American dream to the fullest. May Paul's life be richly blessed as he celebrates 103 years well-lived.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. JAMES E. ALDREDGE

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Dr. James E. Aldredge, a trailblazer, educator, and public servant whose lifelong commitment to improving the City of Fresno—particularly for residents in Southwest Fresno—has left an enduring mark on our community. Dr. Aldredge passed away peacefully on October 12, 2025, surrounded by his loved ones.

Born in Gilmer, Texas, and raised in Fresno from the age of four, Dr. Aldredge's story is one of perseverance, excellence, and service. A star athlete at Edison High School, he signed with the Pittsburgh Pirates at just seventeen years old, showcasing the talent and determination that would define his life. After a career-ending injury ended his professional baseball aspirations, Dr. Aldredge redirected his focus to education, an area he would champion for decades to come.

Dr. Aldredge earned degrees from Fresno City College and California State University, Fresno, before completing both a master's and Ph.D. in Organizational Development at the University of Southern California, with additional studies at Oxford University. His academic journey reflected his deep belief that education is the key opportunity, a principle he shared throughout his life with students and colleagues alike.

In 1985, Dr. Aldredge made history when he became Fresno's first Black City Manager, breaking barriers and paving the way for future generations of leaders. His steady leadership, integrity, and commitment to equity guided the city through times of transition and progress. After retiring from City Hall in 1989, he continued to serve the community as an educator at Fresno State, City College, the University of San Francisco, and Fresno Pacific University, mentoring countless students who would go on to serve their own communities with the same sense of purpose.

Beyond public service, Dr. Aldredge dedicated his time to numerous organizations, including the boards of Saint Agnes Hospital, Kings View Behavioral Health, and CEN-CAL Business Finance Group. He also established a foundation that grew over one million dollars in assets to support students, athletes, and social services. Among his many honors, he received the B'nai B'rith Award for his lifelong commitment to justice and equality and was inducted into the State Center Community College District's Wall of Honor at the African American Historical and Cultural Museum.

Dr. Aldredge was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Daisy Rae, and his brother, John Aldredge. He is remembered by his family, friends, colleagues, and former students for his humor, wisdom, and unwavering belief in Fresno's potential. His legacy continues

through the James E. Aldredge Foundation, which embodies his vision of empowering others through education and civic engagement.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in recognizing and celebrating the extraordinary life of Dr. James E. Aldredge. His story reminds us that true leadership is rooted in service, resilience, and commitment to uplifting the communities we call home.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HIS ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

HON. BARRY MOORE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. MOORE of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the remarkable accomplishments of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. His All-Holiness is not only a recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal, but he is also soon to be the recipient of the Templeton Award, the world's foremost award in Religion and Science.

His All-Holiness is the spiritual leader and Primus inter Pares of Orthodox Christianity, providing leadership to a Church of 300 million people. He has throughout his ministry been a foremost advocate of religious freedom and has regularly traveled to countries hostile to Christians in order to advocate for peace.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew is a leading figure in the dialogues of the Abrahamic Faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and his presence in Washington, D.C. is an extraordinary opportunity to highlight the positive role that religious leaders of his stature bring to the cause of religious liberty.

On behalf of the people of Alabama, especially the Orthodox community of my district, I want to thank His All-Holiness for his continued efforts towards peace for Christians everywhere.

RECOGNIZING DAN MOLNAR AS THE CHAMPION OF THE WEEK FOR OHIO'S 13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dan Molnar as the Champion of the Week for Ohio's 13th Congressional District.

This year during the Akron Marathon, Dan, a local nurse practitioner, was cheering his fiancée on when a runner collapsed due to experiencing cardiac arrest. Dan hurdled a barricade, and joined other medical personnel to help.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

He immediately began CPR on the runner for roughly five minutes. His quick response helped the runner regain a pulse, ultimately saving his life.

During the emotional ordeal, Dan missed seeing his fiancée cross the finish line, but he told a local news outlet that if he had to do it all over again, he would still jump in to help.

For his heroic actions, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to Dan and members of the Akron Fire Department for answering the call to help a neighbor in need. Dan is a shining example of why Ohio's 13th Congressional District is known as the "Birthplace of Champions."

HONORING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, with tremendous pride, I rise today to honor the founding of the United States Marine Corps nearly 250 years ago.

On November 10, 1775, the Second Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia passed a resolution stating that two Battalions of Marines be raised for service as landing forces with the fleet.

This resolution established the Continental Marines and marked the birth date of the United States Marine Corps.

For 250 years, the United States Marine Corps has embodied the American spirit, fighting to preserve our collective future with every victory. The year-long commemoration of this milestone anniversary celebrates a legacy of honor, courage, and commitment to our country.

As history records, the Marine Corps stands ever ready to continue in the proud tradition of those who so valiantly fought and died at Belleau Wood, Iwo Jima, the Chosin Reservoir, and Khe Sanh.

In the spirit of Semper Fidelis, the Marines have demonstrated steadfast loyalty and continually worked to help our Nation become that more perfect Union. Once again, our brave men and women in uniform remind us of what unites us all.

On behalf of everyone in the 13th Congressional District, I salute the United States Marine Corps on its 250th anniversary and express gratitude for unparalleled service and sacrifice, security and protection.

RECOGNIZING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF CARMICHAEL RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT

HON. AMI BERA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Carmichael Recreation and Park District on their 80th Anniversary. Through their mission, they have provided valuable community resources that have enriched the lives of its residents.

Starting in 1945, Carmichael Park and Recreation District acquired its first land parcel that went on to become their flagship park, Carmichael Park. After further land acquisitions between 1971 and 1990, the district now includes 12 additional park sites.

Parks in the district are major community hubs that include playgrounds, dog parks, ball fields, tennis and pickleball courts, as well as community gathering spaces. With their wide variety of outdoor spaces, the parks attract thousands of visitors every year.

Over their 80 years of service, the Carmichael Recreation and Park District has successfully maintained its parks and facilities through many challenges. They continue to provide exceptional recreation experiences and will continue to do so for many years to come.

I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing this day as the Carmichael Recreation and Park District's 80th Anniversary and thank them for their dedication to their community and its residents.

HONORING THE MILESTONE OF THE CALIFORNIA WOMEN FOR AGRICULTURE ON ITS 50TH

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the 50th Anniversary of California Women for Agriculture.

Founded in 1975 in the Coachella Valley, this remarkable organization has become a powerful voice for women in agriculture throughout California. What began as a small group of farmers, ranchers, and consumers united by a shared commitment to agriculture has grown into a statewide movement dedicated to education, advocacy, and community engagement.

For five decades, California Women for Agriculture has built a proud legacy of supporting both the industry and the people who sustain it. Programs such as Ag Venture, which introduces community leaders to the crops and challenges of farming, and Adopt-a-Legislator, which fosters relationships between members and policymakers, have ensured that agriculture remains a vital part of California's future.

Local chapters serve as hubs of activity and outreach, hosting student career tours, scholarship programs, community dinners, and fundraising events that celebrate our agricultural heritage while building strong connections. Their efforts inspire the next generation to pursue careers in agriculture and empower women to serve as leaders in this essential industry.

As we mark this milestone, we pay tribute to the vision and determination of the women who founded this organization and to all those who have carried their mission forward with dedication and heart.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating California Women for Agriculture on 50 years of unwavering service to agriculture and to communities across our state.

RECOGNIZING SETH GOLD

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Seth Gold for his service to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

A native of Cincinnati, Ohio and graduate of The George Washington University for both a Bachelor of Science in Public Health and Master of Public Health—Seth began his career on Capitol Hill as a Health Legislative Assistant for Dr. Michael Burgess (TX-26) in 2016 before moving to the Senate to work as Health Policy Advisor for Senator Rob Portman (OH) in 2017. In May 2021, Seth joined the Subcommittee on Health for the House Committee on Energy and Commerce when I served as Subcommittee Republican Leader, and later Subcommittee Chair, under Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers. During his time under Chair Rodgers and myself, Seth was an invaluable Professional Staff Member and under his leadership—our committee strengthened Medicaid through the Working Families Tax Cuts, which established Medicaid work requirements and expanded home and community-based services to new beneficiaries.

After serving two Chairs and three Subcommittee Chairmen, Seth will soon depart Capitol Hill and move to Louisiana to serve as the Policy Director for the Louisiana Department of Health. I wish him the best, congratulate him on his new role, and thank Seth Gold for his service to the House Committee on Energy and United States Congress.

RECOGNIZING PRESIDENT ÁLVARO URIBE VÉLEZ

HON. CARLOS A. GIMENEZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. GIMENEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the former President of the Republic of Colombia, Álvaro Uribe Vélez, for his extraordinary leadership, steadfast defense of democracy, and unwavering commitment to the safety and prosperity of the Colombian people.

President Uribe assumed office in 2002 during one of the most challenging periods in Colombia's modern history, a time marked by violence, narco-terrorism, and instability. Through his bold and visionary "Democratic Security" policy, President Uribe restored law and order, dismantled the strongholds of terrorist organizations like the FARC, and reestablished the authority of the Colombian state across the nation.

Under his leadership, Colombia's economy flourished through increased trade and investment. His administration strengthened U.S.-Colombian relations, culminating in the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, which expanded cooperation on security and counter-narcotics efforts.

President Uribe's courage in confronting narco-terrorist groups and his dedication to the rule of law set a model for democratic governance. For his leadership, integrity, and tireless defense of liberty, many regard President

Uribe as the Abraham Lincoln of Colombia, a unifying figure who preserved his nation's democracy and restored hope to millions.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing President Álvaro Uribe Vélez for his historic contributions to the people of Colombia and to the cause of freedom and democracy.

**HONORING DENICE GERSTENBERG
FOR HER DISTINGUISHED CAREER
IN PUBLIC SERVICE**

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend Denice Gerstenberg on the occasion of her retirement after more than three decades of exceptional service in municipal government. Throughout her distinguished career, Denice Gerstenberg has embodied the values of professionalism, compassion, and community commitment that define true public service.

Before joining the City of Algonac, Denice Gerstenberg devoted over twenty-six years to the City of Sterling Heights, Michigan, where she developed a deep understanding of city operations, policy development, and community engagement. Her dedication, integrity, and strong work ethic earned her the respect of colleagues, elected officials, and residents alike.

In 2017, Denice Gerstenberg accepted the position of City Manager for the City of Algonac. Bringing with her a wealth of experience and steady leadership, she guided the city through a period of continued growth and renewal.

Under her leadership, Algonac has continued to thrive as a welcoming waterfront community, a place where residents, visitors, and businesses alike can live, work, and play. Her prudent management of city finances, steadfast support for public works, and calm guidance during times of transition, both infrastructural and public health related, have left a lasting mark on the city's stability and success.

A proud graduate of the University of Michigan, Denice Gerstenberg earned both her Bachelor's Degree in Arts & Sciences and her Master's Degree in Public Health. She also holds a certification as a Professional Emergency Manager. Her academic achievement, coupled with her extensive professional experience, made her uniquely effective in connecting policy, people, and public well-being.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Denice Gerstenberg will be remembered for her integrity, compassion, and mentorship. She cultivated collaboration within City Hall, encouraged professional growth among city staff, and strengthened partnerships with community organizations and residents. Her belief in teamwork and civic engagement has left an enduring legacy in Algonac and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Denice Gerstenberg for her remarkable career and in wishing her every happiness in retirement. Her leadership, integrity, and service to the people of Michigan exemplify the best of local government and public service.

**HONORING MRS. YAKITTA
LANDRUM-LOVETT**

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding healthcare professional, Mrs. Yakitta Landrum-Lovett, for her dedication, compassion, and exemplary service to her patients, colleagues, and community.

Mrs. Lovett has been employed at The Medical Center for 23 years, where she continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to excellence in patient care and leadership. Her professionalism, integrity, and service-minded spirit have earned her the respect and admiration of her peers.

She has been married for 22 years to Mr. Larry R. Lovett, Jr., and together they have two children, Lailah and Keelan. Beyond her professional achievements, Mrs. Lovett is deeply rooted in her faith and community. She is an active member of New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church, where she serves on the Health Ministry and as a Youth Advisor.

Mrs. Lovett's passion for nursing extends beyond the workplace. She is a member of the Eliza Pillars Registered Nurses Association for District 2, the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, and serves on the board of My Preemie & Me, Inc.—a testament to her commitment to advancing the field of nursing and supporting families in need.

Her colleague, Chrissy Nicholson, Chief Human Resources Officer, shared, "Yakitta displays true leadership in her role with the added bonus of a caring, dedicated, and compassionate nurse. I am grateful that she is on our team."

In her own words, Mrs. Lovett said, "I enjoy helping my community become healthier one step at a time. I like working here because of the close-knit family atmosphere and how we show up for each other in times of need and adversity."

Outside of her professional and community endeavors, Mrs. Lovett enjoys shopping, traveling, cooking, and spending time with family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Yakitta Landrum-Lovett for her outstanding service, leadership, and unwavering commitment to her profession and community.

**HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE MADDY INSTITUTE**

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the 25th anniversary of the Maddy Institute, headquartered at California State University, Fresno, for its extraordinary contributions to civic education, leadership development, and public policy engagement in the San Joaquin Valley, California, and our Nation.

The Maddy Institute was founded in 1999 through California Senate Bill 733, making it

the first and only public policy institute formally established by the California Legislature. Since its inception, the institute has embodied the vision and values of its namesake, the late Senator Kenneth L. Maddy, a distinguished public servant whose nearly three decades in the California Legislature were marked by integrity, bipartisanship, and a deep commitment to the people of the Central Valley.

Guided by this purpose, the Maddy Institute has pursued a clear and enduring mission: to provide a nonpartisan venue for thoughtful dialogue on pressing public policy issues; to strengthen civic participation; to prepare the next generation of leaders; and to enhance the engagement, efficiency, and effectiveness of government at all levels.

Over the past quarter century, The Maddy Institute has become a cornerstone of civic life in the San Joaquin Valley. Through its flagship programs, The Maddy Report, Valley Views radio program, and The Maddy Daily news aggregator, the institute has informed and engaged thousands of residents, ensuring that critical policy issues are accessible to the communities they affect.

The institute's impact extends far beyond information sharing. Its leadership and internship initiatives, including the "Maddy Interns and Costa Scholars" programs respectively, have opened doors for countless students to serve in Sacramento and Washington, D.C., equipping them with the knowledge and experience to become the next generation of civic, business, and nonprofit leaders. Its forums and summits, including the recently launched Ag Policy Summit, bring together leaders from across sectors to address some of the most complex challenges facing California's heartland.

From producing groundbreaking documentaries on air quality to championing civic engagement through the Citizenship Academy, The Maddy Institute has consistently elevated public discourse and advanced practical solutions for regional statewide challenges. Its alumni now hold leadership roles in business, education, government, law, and public service, carrying forward Senator Maddy's enduring legacy.

In 2024, the Institute marked another milestone with the appointment of Blake Zante, a proud Maddy alumnus, as its Executive Director, building upon the leadership of Mark Keppler, who guided the Institute for two transformative decades. Today, The Maddy Institute continues to thrive as a collaborative partnership among four universities: California State University Fresno, California State University Bakersfield, California State University Stanislaus, and the University of California Merced, an unprecedented model for regional innovation and civic leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating The Maddy Institute for its 25 years of service, its ongoing commitment to civic leadership and public service, and its enduring impact on the future of our Valley and the State of California.

HONORING THE SANTA ROSA HIGH SCHOOL WARRIOR GRILLERS

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Santa Rosa High School Warrior Grillers for winning the Third Annual La Feria Independent School District (ISD) BBQ Cook-Off, earning the title of Grand Champion in their very first competition. This remarkable achievement reflects the Valley's deep-rooted tradition of community, culture, and culinary excellence.

What began just three years ago as a small local contest has grown into a cherished Rio Grande Valley tradition, bringing together 24 teams of talented young cooks, educators, and families from across South Texas. Competitions like these do more than celebrate great barbecue, they strengthen community ties, honor cultural heritage, and teach students lasting lessons in teamwork, creativity, and pride in where they come from.

I want to recognize La Feria ISD Agricultural Science Teacher Mr. Robert Salazar for his leadership in launching this event, and all the educators and mentors who help students develop valuable life skills through barbecue, from collaboration and confidence to craftsmanship and commitment.

I congratulate again all the teams who fired up their pits, competed in good spirit, and brought home some serious Valley flavor. I am proud to honor a tradition that is uniquely Texan and deeply rooted in the heart of our community.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF ENTERGY'S NUCLEAR POWER SITE, WATERFORD 3 STEAM ELECTRIC STATION IN KILLONA, LOUISIANA

HON. TROY A. CARTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to humbly honor and celebrate the 40th anniversary of Entergy's Waterford 3 Steam Electric Station, proudly located in Louisiana's 2nd Congressional District, which I represent in Louisiana.

Since 1985, Entergy's Waterford 3 Steam Electric Station has proudly served the residents of St. Charles Parish, the State of Louisiana, and the Gulf Coast region for 40 years, providing safe, reliable, and carbon-free electricity.

Waterford 3's clean, reliable generation supports Entergy's commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2050, with interim goals of a 50 percent emission rate reduction by 2030 and a 50 percent carbon-free energy-generating capacity by 2030. This plant is a cornerstone of energy resilience in Southeast Louisiana, playing a vital role in meeting the power needs of nearly half a million customers by providing a maximum dependable capacity of 1,152 megawatts and contributing to grid stability during periods of peak demand and extreme weather events.

Waterford 3 employs more than 800 employees and contractors who have demonstrated a commitment to operational excellence, nuclear safety, emergency preparedness, and professional standards, exemplifying the spirit of public service and technical leadership. Additionally, Waterford 3 has maintained a strong and ongoing partnership with the St. Charles Parish community, providing local jobs, supporting charitable organizations, investing in STEM education, and preparing future generations through workforce development initiatives.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the plant's operation and the 100th anniversary of Entergy serving the state of Louisiana. This milestone honors the legacy and achievements of its employees and the plant's significant role in Louisiana's energy future.

I congratulate Entergy's Waterford 3 Steam Electric Station, its leadership, and employees, on their anniversary. I extend my best wishes to Entergy for maintaining its commitment to powering Louisiana and for being a strong community partner throughout the state.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF LINCOLN

HON. KEVIN KILEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and recognize the Rotary Club of Lincoln on their centennial anniversary.

The Rotary Club of Lincoln began meeting one hundred years ago in 1925 and, since then, have become a pillar of the Lincoln community and a symbol of our region's character. Weekly, the organization comes together to provide aid and comfort to the less fortunate, to honor community leaders, to promote integrity, and to work towards performing meaningful service with the purpose of building a better world. The Rotary Club of Lincoln is an award-winning service club that has obtained a wide diversity of accomplishments over the years. Some of the programs they have sponsored include blood drives, food distribution, supporting Downtown Lincoln and our local agricultural industry, advancing education initiatives and extracurricular activities for students, organizing tree-planting events, and awarding scholarships, among many other efforts.

I am grateful for their significant contributions in our community and am confident that the legacy of service they have built over these past 100 years will only continue to grow in the years to come. Their efforts have made a lasting and meaningful impact in the city of Lincoln and the surrounding region, contributing towards the quality of life and well-being in our community.

It is my distinct honor to represent exemplary organizations, such as the Rotary Club of Lincoln, in Congress. Therefore, on behalf of California's 3rd Congressional District and the United States House of Representatives, I extend my most sincere congratulations to them on this remarkable milestone.

HONORING JOE SILL

HON. VINCE FONG

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleague, Representative DAVID G. VALADAO, to honor Joe Sill of Shafter, California, on his recognition as the 2025 Kern County Cattleman of the Year.

Born in 1946 to Frank and Claire Clerou Sill, Joe was raised in a family whose roots run deep in Kern County agriculture. From an early age, he worked alongside his brothers, Mike and Tim, his sister, Trish, and many cousins in the family's potato shed in Shafter, where his parents instilled in him a strong work ethic and lifelong respect for honest labor. By age 14, Joe was driving feed trucks and caring for cattle at the Sill Properties feedlot, an experience that would spark his enduring passion for the cattle industry.

Joe graduated from Games Memorial High School in 1965, then attended the New Mexico Military Institute, where he played football and ran track before continuing his studies at Fresno State University. There, he joined the rodeo team and Kappa Sigma fraternity, graduating in 1970 with a degree in Agricultural Business Management. After college, Joe spent time working in Hawaii and later as a cowboy for Camp and Mebane Cattle Company, balancing hard work with his love of the outdoors.

Joe's spirit of adventure took him abroad to Australia in 1971, where he helped rancher Dick Stone establish his first feedlot and worked in the sheep and horse industries. Upon returning home to Kern County, Joe re-joined Sill Properties, managing cattle ranches in the Cuyama Valley in partnership with his future father-in-law, Jean Garcin. He also gained valuable experience at O.K. Meat Packing Company in Los Angeles, learning the packing and purchasing sides of the livestock business.

In 1979, Joe married the love of his life, Vicki Garcin, and together they made their home in Shafter, raising three children: Joseph, Danielle, and Dominic. As manager of the Sill Properties feedlot and several cattle ranches, Joe oversaw operations across California, Oregon, Nevada, and Arizona, ensuring the continued success of a family legacy built over generations.

After retiring from Sill Properties in 2018, Joe remained active in the family's enterprises by serving on numerous boards. He and Vicki also founded J & V Sill Cattle Company with their three children, a venture that has become Joe's greatest joy. Today, he continues to share his deep knowledge and love of the ranching lifestyle with his eight grandchildren, who represent the next generation of Kern County cattlemen and women.

Mr. Speaker, Representative VALADAO and I, ask our colleagues to join us in congratulating Joe Sill on being named the 2025 Kern County Cattleman of the Year, and in celebrating his lasting contributions to Kern County's proud agricultural heritage.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF DR.
JOSEPH I. CASTRO

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life and legacy of Dr. Joseph Isaac Castro, a devoted educator, public servant, and beloved son of California's San Joaquin Valley, who passed away on August 14, 2025, at the age of 58, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Dr. Castro's life embodied the American Dream. Born and raised in Hanford California, the grandson of Mexican immigrants and farmworkers, and the son of a single mother, he rose from humble beginnings to become a national leader in high education. He was the first in his family to graduate from college, earning degrees from the University of California Berkeley, and a Ph.D. from Stanford University in Higher Education Policy and Leadership.

His remarkable career spanned more than three decades, during which he held senior leadership roles across the University of California system, including Berkeley, Davis, Santa Barbara, San Francisco, and as a part of the founding leadership at UC Merced.

In 2013, Dr. Castro made history by becoming President of California State University, Fresno; the first native Californian and first Mexican American to serve in this role. Under his transformative leadership, Fresno State emerged as a national leader in supporting and graduating students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds.

On January 4, 2021, Dr. Castro assumed the role of CSU Chancellor, becoming the first Mexican American and the first California native to lead the 23-campus CSU system. His appointment represents a milestone for diversity in higher education and a hopeful future for the nearly half a million students across the CSU system.

Dr. Castro was more than an accomplished academic administrator; he was a kind and compassionate man who inspired thousands. He believed deeply in the transformative power of education to change lives, families, and entire communities. His leadership earned national recognition, including the prestigious Ohtli Award, the highest honor given by the Government of Mexico for service to the Mexican and Mexican American community.

To his family, Dr. Joseph I. Castro was a devoted husband, father, and man of faith. He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Mary; their children Isaac, Lauren, and Jess; and daughter-in-law, Marilyn; as well as by his friends and the many lives he touched throughout his life. Even in his final months, he remained guided by purpose and a deep belief in every student's potential. His legacy lives on in the lives he changed, the institutions he strengthened, and the communities he served.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Joseph Isaac Castro for his extraordinary service to California and the Nation. May his life continue to inspire future generations to lead with vision, compassion, and an unshakable commitment to justice and opportunity for all.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LEE
GARY "TOT" BOOKER

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lee Gary "Tot" Booker, who passed away peacefully on September 10, 2025, at the age of 85. Mr. Booker was a trailblazing firefighter, a dedicated public servant, and a beloved member of the Marin County community.

Born on July 9, 1940, in Bryant, Mississippi, Gary overcame a childhood marked by serious illness through the care of his grandparents, who raised him as their own. He excelled in both academics and athletics, showing early signs of the determination and perseverance that would define his life. He left Mississippi after high school and moved to Marin City, California, where he joined his mother and stepfather and immediately began working at Marin General Hospital.

In 1961, Gary was drafted by the state of Mississippi but chose instead to enlist in the United States Navy in San Rafael, California. He served nearly six years, including aboard the U.S.S. Ticonderoga during the Vietnam War, where he worked on crash, firefighting, and rescue teams. His service shaped his lifelong calling to protect others.

Upon completing his military service, Gary joined the Marin County Fire Department in 1966. Over the course of three decades, he broke barriers and blazed trails of firsts. In 1970, he became the first African American Fire Captain in Marin County, leading the Marin City Station and establishing its first community relations program. His leadership, professionalism, and courage earned him successive promotions to Assistant Fire Chief in 1981, Battalion Chief in 1984, and County Safety Officer later in his distinguished career. Through his many years of service, Mr. Booker received numerous awards and honors for his dedication to the safety and well-being of Marin County residents.

In 1970, Gary married Judith Ann Du Pont. He was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather who cherished time with his family and found joy in the outdoors. An avid hunter and fisherman, Gary's annual trips to Colorado and Montana were a source of great happiness. His warmth, humor, and storytelling made him a pillar in his community and a mentor to countless colleagues and friends.

Mr. Booker is survived by his daughter, Lomia and her husband Allen, stepdaughter Donnailla, and his grandchildren Nicole, Alayah, and Jordan. He is also survived by his brothers Ralph and Drew, sisters Trellis and Norma, and his uncle Tobe, as well as many nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife Judith, daughter Garrian "Beetle," and several siblings.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that Lee Gary "Tot" Booker was a man of courage and vision whose trailblazing service helped shape the Marin County Fire Department and inspired generations of firefighters who followed. I respectfully ask that you join me in honoring his extraordinary life and extending condolences to his family, friends, and all those who had the privilege of knowing him.

RECOGNIZING VINCE MARCHETTA
AS THE CHAMPION OF THE
WEEK FOR OHIO'S 13TH CON-
GRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Vince Marchetta as the Champion of the Week for Ohio's 13th Congressional District.

Vince recently earned the State Lead Ambassador of the Year Award from the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. This award recognizes his efforts to help make cancer a national priority.

After losing his wife, Betsy, to metastatic cervical cancer, Vince became dedicated to supporting families affected by cancer and fighting for a cure. As an American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network volunteer for the past six years, Vince has worked tirelessly alongside some of the most dedicated and passionate advocates to ensure everyone has a fair and just opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer.

Specifically, he has worked to advocate for better screening to prevent late-stage diagnosis, improving access to health care and treatment, clinical trials, and funding for research for those battling cancer. He is passionate about ensuring all Americans have access to the medical care that could save their lives.

With this award, and all the hard work that came before it, Vince is a shining example of why Ohio's 13th Congressional District is known as the "Birthplace of Champions." He has certainly made our community proud.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF
ERICA "RIKKI" MILLER AND HER
WORK ON BEHALF OF MICHIGAN'S 3RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. HILLARY J. SCHOLTEN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the remarkable contributions of a woman who needs no introduction, Ms. Erica "Rikki" Miller, to our country and to the House of Representatives. For nearly the last decade, Rikki has served with integrity, compassion, and a deep sense of duty. Whether it was driving a Member as a humble staff assistant, enhancing the caucus communications, directing communications on energy policy for a senior Member of Energy and Commerce or helping a brand new freshman establish her office as chief of staff, Rikki approached every task with the same commitment—to make life better for the people we serve.

Rikki's decade of congressional service began as an intern for Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL, where she was soon hired full time as constituent relations and press assistant. After two years with Congresswoman DINGELL, Rikki joined now Leader JEFFRIES inaugural leadership team. As their press assistant, Rikki helped plan the Caucus issues conference and lead the Caucus's communication

efforts during the Mueller trials and historic first impeachment. She then spent four years with Congresswoman KATHY CASTOR as her communications director, where she led the team during the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath.

After four years with Congresswoman CASTOR, Rikki was called back home to Michigan to be chief of staff for my district office. As chief, Rikki helped build the office from the ground up, leading the team through my first term. There, Rikki established herself as a mentor to those in the office, and to other chiefs as well.

Public service isn't always glamorous. It demands patience, perseverance, and quiet strength. There are early mornings, late nights, and countless moments when the work you do goes unnoticed by the world outside. But it's people like Rikki who keep everything running—the unseen hands and steady hearts behind the work we all depend on, whether we realize it or not.

Rikki has been so much more than a House employee, she's been a mentor to new young staff, a colleague, and a friend to all. Rikki lights up any room she walks in. She knows everyone's name and treats everyone the same. She has shared her knowledge generously, guided others through challenges, and shown us what public service truly looks like. Many of us here have learned from her—not just how to do our jobs, but how to do them with purpose.

We will miss Rikki and her steady presence, her joyful spirit, and her years of experience. But we take comfort in knowing that the values she has instilled will continue to guide this workplace in the dozens of new staffers she has trained and inspired. She has left it stronger, kinder, and more resilient than when she arrived.

On behalf of a grateful country, and especially the people of Michigan's 3rd Congressional District, we thank her.

HONORING THE VISIT OF HIS ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

HON. SARAH MCBRIDE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Ms. MCBRIDE. Mr. Speaker, this September, our Nation had the distinct honor of welcoming His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Washington, D.C. As the spiritual leader of over 300 million Orthodox Christians around the world, His All-Holiness has earned global recognition. His decades of service have been marked by moral clarity and a steadfast belief that faith must be a force for reconciliation.

In every part of the world, the Ecumenical Patriarch has used his respected voice to unite religious leaders against the use of violence in the name of faith. At the same time, he has advanced the causes of human rights and environmental protection—issues that reflect his conviction that moral responsibility extends to both humanity and creation. His visit to Washington this September was a continuation of that mission, as he met with President Donald Trump and Members of Congress from

both parties to reaffirm our shared values of peace and understanding.

During this historic visit, His All-Holiness was also recognized in New York with the Templeton Prize—one of the world's most distinguished honors celebrating spiritual vision and leadership. This recognition, together with his meetings in our capital, reflects the vital role that faith leaders of his stature play in advancing the universal principles of liberty, mutual respect, and dialogue that strengthen our common humanity.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN CHARLES HARRIS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of John Charles Harris, a giant of California agriculture and the San Joaquin Valley, who recently passed away at the age of 81. He was a devoted husband, visionary businessman, mentor, leader, and dear friend whose contributions shaped generations of farmers, ranchers, and horsemen throughout our state and Nation.

John was born on July 14, 1943, and was a lifelong resident of Fresno County. A proud graduate of UC Davis, he also served honorably in the United States Army. His roots in the Valley ran deep, and his lifelong dedication to agriculture and community set him apart as a pillar of integrity and service.

As the driving force behind Harris Farms and Harris Ranch Beef Company, John played a pivotal role in building one of California's largest and most innovative agricultural enterprises. From his family's beginnings in farming, he helped grow Harris Farms into a sprawling multimillion-dollar operation known for its innovation, quality, and sustainability. The farm produced over 30 different crops including garlic, pistachios, and wine grapes, and was home to the iconic Harris Ranch Inn and Restaurant, a familiar and beloved stop for travelers on Interstate 5 between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Under John's leadership, Harris Ranch Beef Company became one of the largest beef producers in the Western United States.

Beyond the ranch, John was revered in the world of Thoroughbred horse racing. He bred and raced numerous champions and stood out as a passionate advocate for the industry. His leadership extended to roles on the California Horse Racing Board, California Thoroughbred Breeders Association, Thoroughbred Owners of California, and the Jockey Club.

John's influence transcended business and horse racing. He was deeply committed to education, mentorship, and philanthropy. John's leadership extended far beyond agriculture and racing. He was a devoted advocate for education and public service. Whether through philanthropy, mentorship, or policy leadership, he was always focused on empowering the next generation. John supported Fresno State's Maddy Institute and established the Jack A. Harris Memorial Scholarship Fund to help young agricultural leaders succeed. His acts of generosity, whether public or private, were grounded in a genuine belief in uplifting others and investing in the future of his community.

In June of this year, John married Cookie Harris. He is survived by Cookie, extended family, and many cherished friends, colleagues, and mentees who were touched by his humility, wisdom, and compassion.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and celebrating the extraordinary life of John Charles Harris, my dear friend whose legacy, rooted in hard work, vision, and generosity, will live on through the land he stewarded, the horses he raised, the communities he served, and the countless lives he inspired.

RECOGNIZING FREEMAN JOHNSON

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Freeman Johnson, a resident of Centerville, Massachusetts and the oldest survivor of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Born on March 11, 1920, Johnson was raised in Waltham, Massachusetts. After graduating high school, Johnson attended Massachusetts Nautical School in Boston, presently Massachusetts Maritime Academy in Buzzards Bay. He then went on to enlist in the United States Navy in December 1939. After completing training in Newport, Rhode Island, Johnson was assigned to serve aboard the USS *St. Louis* as a Machinist First Class.

On the morning of December 7, 1941, the USS *St. Louis* was docked at Pearl Harbor awaiting repairs to its boiler. Johnson was working at the bottom of the ship in the boiler room when the attacks began. Although he could not see the strikes, he could feel and hear the vibrations as the USS *Arizona* and USS *Oklahoma* were struck. Understanding the urgency of the situation, Johnson and his fellow shipmates quickly got to work to repair the boiler. In less than 40 minutes the USS *St. Louis* was up and underway, earning the nickname "the Lucky Lou."

After Pearl Harbor, Johnson was transferred to the USS *Iowa* to help commission the ship that would bring President Franklin D. Roosevelt across the Atlantic Ocean for the Tehran Conference with Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin in November 1943. It was also on the USS *Iowa* in Tokyo Bay, where Johnson would watch the Japanese sign the Instrument of Surrender on the USS *Missouri*.

After the war, Johnson returned home to Waltham and married Ruth Hills. Together they raised three daughters, Diane, Edie, and Cindy. For many years, Johnson worked as a machinist at W.H. Nichols. Known for his steadfast work ethic, he retired at age 90 from Meals on Wheels.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Freeman Johnson, and I ask that my colleagues join me this Veterans Day in thanking him and the millions of veterans and service members who have bravely dedicated their lives to protecting our country.

RECOGNIZING THE 130TH
ANNIVERSARY OF FAIR OAKS

HON. AMI BERA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Fair Oaks on their 130th Anniversary. Originally founded as an agricultural colony, Fair Oaks has grown into an area of deep cultural history and a strong sense of community.

The land in Fair Oaks was part of the original 1844 Mexican Land Grant, Rancho San Juan, and was advertised as a new paradise waiting for farmers looking to make a comfortable living. Even though founding residents experienced hardships like the Great Depression, World War II, and a devastating freeze that wiped out many citrus crops, the area continued to thrive and develop.

As Fair Oaks grew, so too did its industry and commerce. The completion of the Folsom and Nimbus dams, and arrival of Aerojet signaled a new page in Fair Oaks' history. Fair Oaks is a booming town that continues to change with its fast-growing population.

It is with great appreciation to the Fair Oaks Historical Society that the founding and legacy of Fair Oaks has continued to be preserved and honored. On this day, the Society celebrates their 50th Anniversary alongside Fair Oaks' 130th Anniversary.

I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing this day as Fair Oaks' 130th Anniversary and commend this community's beautiful history.

HONORING KENTUCKY CHIEF
JUSTICE DEBRA LAMBERT

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the first female Chief Justice of Kentucky Debra Hembree Lambert, who was elected to the helm of the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of Kentucky by her fellow Justices. Chief Justice Lambert will serve a four-year term, which began on January 6, 2025.

Chief Justice Lambert is a proud native of Bell County, a rural community in Kentucky's Appalachian Mountains and part of Kentucky's 5th Congressional District. During her investiture, she reflected on how her childhood shaped her pursuit of justice, stating, "When you grow up so modestly, you develop a strong sense of a need for a level playing field and for everyone to be heard. Those concepts are foundational in my world view."

Chief Justice Lambert has 17 years of experience on the Kentucky Court of Justice, having served as Circuit Judge/Family Court division for the 28th Judicial Circuit, Kentucky Court of Appeals, and Justice for Kentucky's 3rd Supreme Court District. She was also tapped to lead the first Kentucky Judicial Commission on Mental Health in 2022, working to improve the justice system for individuals with mental health issues, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. In fact, she volunteers as a certified

suicide prevention trainer, training others how to properly intervene to prevent suicide.

Her compassion and fortitude for justice as a Family Court Judge inspired her to create the first Drug Court for Lincoln, Pulaski and Rockcastle counties. As the founder of Operation UNITE, I worked tirelessly to ensure those successful Drug Court efforts were funded and expanded into every county in Kentucky's 5th Congressional District, which are still in existence today. In 2002, Lambert was inducted into the Stanley M. Goldstein Drug Court Hall of Fame by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals. She also volunteered at local middle schools, working 10 weeks each semester with at-risk children and families to help them avoid truancy charges.

As Chief Justice Lambert leads Kentucky's Judicial Branch of government, I am confident that she will continue to serve the Commonwealth of Kentucky with the utmost integrity and resilience, first forged in the hills of southeastern Kentucky. May God continue to bless Chief Justice Lambert and her family during her historic service as the first woman to lead our Judicial Branch.

HONORING THE MILESTONE OF
MIKE ROOS 80TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my esteemed colleague, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, to honor and celebrate the 80th birthday of Mr. Mike Roos, a devoted public servant, legislative leader, and lifelong advocate for California communities.

Born on August 6, 1945, in Memphis, Tennessee, Mike Roos brought to California a deep passion for public policy and a Tennessee drawl and smile that could put anyone at ease. After earning his bachelor's degree from Tulane University and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Southern California (USC), Mike embarked on a career defined by public service and civic leadership.

In 1977, he was elected to represent Los Angeles' 46th District in the California State Assembly, a role he held for 14 years as he championed issues that shaped the future of his community and the state. During his tenure, Mike rose to the role of Majority Floor Leader, and later Speaker Pro Tempore, presiding over the Assembly in the final years of his service. Throughout, he earned the respect of colleagues on both sides of the aisle for his extraordinary work ethic, sharp policy acumen, and gift for building consensus.

Mike's legislative accomplishments were both timely and visionary. In the early days of the AIDS crisis, when few dared to touch the issue, Mike took bold action to protect the state's blood supply and the public's health. He authored pioneering legislation that laid the groundwork for HIV testing protocols and blood safety, long before it became part of the national conversation. He was also instrumental in advancing California's first recycling law, helping negotiate key amendments to move the "Bottle Bill" out of committee after years of delay. And of course, he co-authored the landmark Roberti-Roos Assault Weapons

Control Act of 1989, the first law of its kind in the Nation, setting a precedent for common-sense gun reforms that still resonate today.

But what truly made Mike stand out was his political compass, he proudly led what he called the "radical center," a group of legislators who reached across the aisle to forge compromises and get things done. In an era when bipartisanship was both a necessity and an art, Mike was a master. His humor, eloquence, and deep sense of purpose made him a trusted leader and an impassioned voice on the Assembly floor. When Mike got serious, people listened.

Beyond his legislative achievements, Mike has been a tireless advocate for education, civil rights, public health, and responsible governance. Whether leading the Los Angeles Educational Alliance for Restructuring Now (LEARN) or mentoring the next generation of civic leaders, Mike has never strayed from his core belief in the power of public service.

Mike is also a devoted and loving father to two daughters—Shelby and Melissa—and a proud grandfather. He welcomed his daughters into his life in his early-to-mid-30's, during the height of his Assembly service, and raised them with the same generosity, humor, and grace he brought to the Legislature.

After his retirement in 1991, Mike continued to influence public policy and community development through his public affairs firm and as President of the Southern California Leadership Council, where he remains a respected voice on economic and infrastructure policy.

Mr. Speaker, Mike Roos is more than a public servant. He is a champion of reform, a proud grandfather, and a dear friend to those who have had the honor of working alongside him. As he celebrates his 80th birthday, we ask our colleagues to join us in honoring Mike's enduring legacy and wishing him continued health and happiness in the years to come.

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF DR. CARLOS J. FINLAY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. CARLOS A. GIMENEZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. GIMENEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Dr. Carlos J. Finlay Elementary School, a dual-language professional development school dedicated to academic excellence and innovative instruction in Miami, Florida.

Dr. Carlos J. Finlay Elementary first opened its doors in the fall of 2000 under the visionary leadership of Principal Lourdes P. Gimenez, who spearheaded the school's founding and development. Since then, successive principals, most recently Ms. Madelyn Rodriguez, have carried forward the mission of providing a world-class child-centered education.

Named in honor of Dr. Carlos Juan Finlay, the world-renowned Cuban epidemiologist who discovered that the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito was the carrier of yellow fever, the school proudly celebrates his legacy of scientific discovery. Its students, affectionately known as the "Skeeters," embody Dr. Finlay's persistence, curiosity, and commitment to learning.

As a proud Title I school, Finlay Elementary combines its dual-language Bilingual School

Organization model with its partnership as a Professional Development School with Florida International University to ensure students are bilingual, biliterate, and prepared to succeed in today's interconnected world.

I am proud to commend all the faculty, staff, students, and families of Dr. Carlos J. Finlay Elementary for twenty-five years of excellence, innovation, and community service. Their dedication exemplifies the very best of Miami-Dade County's public education system. Go Skeeters.

RECOGNIZING APRIL WOODY

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today alongside my colleague Congressman VINCE FONG to recognize Ms. April Woody on being awarded the 2025 Cattlewoman of the Year by the Kern County Cattlewomen's Association.

Nearly sixty years ago, April Woody joined her husband, Ron Woody, in continuing his family's cattle ranching operation. Though new to ranching, she quickly learned the ropes and became an essential part of the operation, helping to carry forward a legacy rooted in hard work and dedication to the family business. Ms. Woody joined the Kern County Cattlewomen in 1969 and became deeply involved in the organization's community work. She organized the fair booth, served on the Cattle Princess Selection Committee, and brought humor to the High Fever Follies fundraiser by wearing the group's famous "beef cut suit." Following her early involvement with the Kern County Cattlewomen, Ms. Woody began a distinguished career in education. She taught both junior high and high school English before earning two master's degrees in Pupil Personnel Services and Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling. For the final sixteen years of her career, she served as a counselor at Centennial High School in Bakersfield, where she dedicated herself to the academic and personal development of all students. Since her retirement, Ms. Woody has reconnected with the cattle community and remains involved with the Kern County Cattlewomen. Over the past nine years, she has served in numerous leadership roles, including Vice President and President. Currently she serves as Secretary and on the Board of Directors, chairs the organization's annual Clay Shoot, and has chaired the Scholarship Committee for seven years. Beyond her service to Kern County Cattlewomen, Ms. Woody also remains active in her church and throughout the community.

Mr. Speaker, we ask our colleagues in the House of Representatives to join us in congratulating Ms. April Woody on being named Kern County's 2025 Cattlewoman of the Year. Her dedication to agriculture, education, and service to the community embodies the values that define the Central Valley.

HONORING DR. BOBBY G. COOPER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable educator, musician, and mentor whose influence has shaped generations of students and preserved the musical legacy of a historic institution, Dr. Bobby G. Cooper.

Perhaps Dr. Cooper's most enduring contribution is the revival of the renowned Utica Jubilee Singers. Originally formed in the early 1900s by Dr. William Holtzclaw, founder of Utica Institute, the Jubilee Singers carried forward a tradition of spirituals rooted in the heritage of the Tuskegee model. Inspired by Holtzclaw's book *Black Man's Burden* and the collected works of J. Roseman Johnson (brother to poet James Weldon Johnson). Dr. Cooper reimaged this historic group in 1980. For forty-five years, he was a pillar of Hinds Community College's Utica Campus, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to education, culture, and community.

What began as a small quartet soon grew choir of young men who carried the soul of Mississippi's spiritual legacy across the Nation and abroad, performing everywhere from community gatherings to international stages in Italy. Though their musical range has broadened over time, Dr. Cooper ensured their foundation remained the spirituals that tell the story of faith, struggle, perseverance.

Born and raised in Bolton, Mississippi, Dr. Cooper's love of music began in childhood. Without a piano of his own, he practiced on a wooden apple crate until, by a stroke of generosity, a local family gifted him a piano. That simple act helped set the course of a lifetime. His journey took him from the Bolton Colored School to Tougaloo Prep and Tougaloo College, and later to advanced studies that culminated in a doctorate.

Before joining the Utica faculty in 1972, Dr. Cooper taught at E.T. Hawkins High School in Forest, Mississippi, and later held positions in Scott County and Colorado, where he pursued his doctoral studies. Over the years, he became not only an educator but a cultural bridge, using music to teach discipline, unity, and pride.

Beyond the classroom, Dr. Cooper shaped the lives of young people in his hometown of Bolton, offering piano lessons and encouragement during a time when there were few Black pianists in the area. His mentorship opened doors for countless children who might never have otherwise discovered their musical gifts.

His home walls are filled with plaques and awards, yet his truest legacy is found in the lives of those he mentored. Many of his former students, including educators and professional musicians, continue to honor him by keeping the Jubilee spirit alive.

Even after 45 years of service, Dr. Cooper continues to share his gift of music every Sunday at Asbury Methodist Church in Bolton, where he has faithfully played for decades. With humility and grace, he reflects on a life of purpose, service, and song, one that has inspired students throughout Mississippi and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. Bobby G. Cooper, an ex-

traordinary Mississippian whose lifelong devotion to education and music has preserved an invaluable cultural legacy for generations to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SHEILA RIGGINS-WHITE

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Sheila Riggins-White, who recently passed away at the age of 77. She was a beloved wife, mother and grandmother.

Sheila was born on June 15, 1948, and had deep roots in the City of Fresno. A proud graduate of Fresno State, Sheila made history in 1989 as the first African American to receive the University's Presidential Medal through the Kremen School of Education and Human Development.

Sheila dedicated her life to education, serving as a teacher and mentor to generation of students, educators, and administrators throughout Fresno. Her impact extended far beyond the classroom—she served as President of the PTA and worked to build strong, lasting bridges between schools and families.

She was also a woman of deep faith, serving as an ordained minister at St. Rest Baptist Church, Fresno's most historic Black church, which was founded by her father, the late Dr. Chester Riggins. Her voice, presence, and leadership inspired thousands, both within the congregation and the broader community.

In addition to her service in education and ministry, Sheila was a gifted artist and poet. Her published work, *Mother Africa*, continues to be discussed and celebrated more than three decades after its release. Sheila was preceded in death by her husband, Paul C. White, who dedicated his life to community development as Assistant Executive Director of the Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission. Together they raised six children and were blessed with thirteen grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and celebrating the extraordinary life of Sheila Riggins-White. Her legacy as an educator, minister, artist, and matriarch will live on in the countless lives she touched. We extend our deepest condolences, thoughts, and prayers to her family and to all who had the privilege of knowing her.

HONORING JOYCE SKONIECZNY

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Joyce Skonieczny, who faithfully served her community for more than four decades as St. Clair Township Clerk. In recognition of her remarkable dedication, the Township has fittingly named the Township Hall in her honor.

Joyce began her service to the Township on January 15, 1979, as Deputy Clerk under then-Township Clerk Dan Ellis, and was appointed Township Clerk on April 2, 1980. Over

her distinguished 44-year career, she worked under ten supervisors—from Bob Ellery, who hired her, to her son-in-law Mike Boulter, under whom she retired on November 19, 2024.

Joyce also witnessed and supported significant growth and development in the Township, including the construction of residential neighborhoods, such as Blue River Gardens, River Ridge, River Pointe Estates, Diamond Meadows, and Golfside, as well as commercial developments like the Mobil Gas Station, Love's on Wadhams Road, and the Dollar General stores on Gratiot and Range Roads. She also saw the expansion of the Township's water and sewer district from a single corridor along River Road to the many subdivisions that exist today.

Beyond her official duties, Joyce devoted herself to building community spirit. Beginning in the early 1980s and continuing until 2020, she organized and hosted a monthly senior luncheon at the Township Hall, held on the third Tuesday of each month. This cherished tradition brought neighbors together for food, fellowship, and friendship.

After 44 years of service, Joyce retired with the respect and gratitude of her community. She leaves behind a legacy of professionalism, kindness, and steadfast commitment to public service. In retirement, she continues to enjoy reading and cherishing time with family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Joyce Skonieczny for her many years of outstanding service and dedication to her community. Her name, now permanently affixed to the Township Hall, will continue to inspire future generations of public servants.

REMEMBERING DANNY BUCKMAN

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Danny Buckman.

A native of Lebanon, Kentucky, Danny Buckman was born on February 2, 1954, to Robert "Bobby" Ray and Mary "Pauline" Buckman. Danny was a lifelong farmer in Marion County who truly loved what he did—growing corn, soybeans, and tobacco, and raising hogs and beef cattle. Farming wasn't just his work; it was a way of life he took great pride in.

He was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather who found great joy in his family. Danny and his wife of 39 years, Sheliah, raised six children—Emily, Olivia, Ben, Katie, Laura, and Elizabeth—and were blessed with two grandchildren, Mia and Finley Ray.

Danny was a man of quiet faith and deep roots, a lifelong member of Our Lady of the Hills Catholic Church in Finley, Kentucky. Friends and family often said the same simple and powerful sentiment: "Danny was a good man." One friend put it best—"He may have been a small man, but he was a big man when you needed him to be."

On August 27, 2025, Danny Buckman passed away at the age of 71. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife, children, grandchildren, and all those who loved him as we remember and celebrate a life so well lived.

RECOGNIZING TIM HAUSER AS THE CHAMPION OF THE WEEK FOR OHIO'S 13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tim Hauser as the Champion of the Week for Ohio's 13th Congressional District.

Tim was recently named the Veteran of the Year by the Veterans Service Commission of Summit County. He is a Gulf War veteran and founder of the Veterans Assurance Network, which provides advocacy, support, education, services, and resources to veterans and their families.

In 1982, Tim joined the U.S. Air Force, where he was deployed to Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm. There, he was exposed to toxic burn pits and oil well fires purposely set by Iraqi forces.

The Department of Defense estimates 3.5 million service members were exposed to toxic burn pits during their time serving abroad. Exposure to burn pits and other toxic airborne substances has been linked to serious health effects, including certain cancers.

Tim worked closely with federal lawmakers to help get the PACT Act signed into law. This landmark law expands VA health care and benefits for veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances.

Tim is also passionate about veteran suicide prevention, and even helped advocate for September 22 to be recognized as Veteran Suicide Awareness and Prevention Day in Ohio.

With this award, and all the hard work that came before it, Tim is a shining example of why Ohio's 13th Congressional District is known as the "Birthplace of Champions." He has certainly made our community proud.

HONORING THE LIFE OF STEVE DAN MAGARIAN

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Steve Dan Magarian, a devoted father, friend, and public servant, who passed away on September 22, 2025, at the age of 82.

Born in Fresno California, on October 13, 1942, Steve was the son of Dan and Alice Magarian and grew up, steeped in the values of hard work, service, and community. He graduated from Roosevelt High School and went on to earn both his bachelor's and master's degrees with distinction from California State University, Fresno.

Steve's early career was altered by a motor vehicle accident that ended his pursuit of military aviation in the United States Air Force. Instead, he returned home and rejoined the grocery business, becoming a store manager in his twenties. But it was his role as a reserve deputy with the Fresno County Sheriff's Office that would change the trajectory of his life.

In 1968, he became a full-time deputy sheriff, beginning a career in law enforcement that

would span more than three decades. He served numerous assignments, including jail, courts, patrol, and steadily rose through the ranks. In 1986, Steve was elected as Fresno County's 23rd sheriff, taking office in 1987. He was reelected twice, unopposed, and served until his retirement in 1999.

Under Sheriff Magarian's leadership, the department secured several milestones, including the construction of the Main Jail and North Annex Jail, the creation of the Air Support Unit, and the implementation of one of the Nation's first computerized field reporting systems. He also spearheaded the formation of the Multi-Agency Gang Enforcement Consortium (MAGEC).

After retiring from law enforcement, Steve continued to serve the community as a professor at California State University, Fresno, teaching part time for 20 years and shaping the next generation of law enforcement professionals with a focus on ethics and integrity, which were his characteristic traits.

He also served as Chief of Investigations for the Fresno County District Attorney's Office, and most recently, as a Trustee of the Fresno Sheriff's Memorial Foundation, where he helped lead efforts to honor fallen officers with a permanent memorial.

Steve Magarian was deeply devoted to his family. He is survived by his wife Joanne, his daughters Erica Magarian and Gina (Brian) Blodgett, and his cherished grandsons, Brandon and Brayden. He was preceded in death by his parents, Dan and Alice, and his sister, Delores Merlo.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Steve Dan Magarian for his extraordinary service to the people of Fresno County and the state of California. May his life continue to inspire future generations to lead with courage, integrity, and unwavering commitment to public service and community.

RECOGNIZING THE DECATUR TELEPHONE COMPANY

HON. MICHAEL GUEST

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of small-town business owners and the impact they have on local communities and to honor the Bailey family and their locally-run Telephone business.

In 1945, newlyweds William D. "Bill" Bailey and Louise Robinson Bailey returned to Bill's hometown of Decatur and purchased the Decatur Telephone Company. For eighty years Decatur Telephone Company has served the East Mississippi community with connectivity. They have gone from the original 7 individual phones in 1945 to laying fiber-optic cable today for a fully digitalized system privately owned in rural Mississippi. The Baileys have made a massive impact on their local community through their active participation in local groups, their church, and their support for their employees. Mr. Bailey passed away in 2015, and Mrs. Bailey continued in daily assistance of the operation of the company until her passing in 2018.

Today, their daughter Dr. Esther Bailey Smith keeps the Decatur Telephone Company

tradition of service alive. Her dedication to the family legacy ensures continued service for many years to come. I am proud to represent Decatur Telephone Company in my Congressional District.

HONORING THE VALLEY BAPTIST
MEDICAL CENTER FOR REACH-
ING AN EXTRAORDINARY MILE-
STONE

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen, Texas, for reaching an extraordinary milestone, treating more than 14,000 stroke cases and transforming stroke care across the Rio Grande Valley.

Before Dr. Ameer Hassan joined Valley Baptist in 2012, stroke patients in South Texas had to travel hours to receive life-saving treatment. Today, thanks to his leadership and the dedication of the neuroscience team, our community has access to some of the most advanced stroke care in the Nation.

Valley Baptist established the first Comprehensive Stroke Center in the region and pioneered the world's first "Hub and Spoke" model integrating AI-powered imaging and mobile stroke alert systems. As a result, stroke mortality and long-term disability in the Valley have decreased by more than 50 percent, with many community members now returning home healthy and whole.

I also commend Dr. Hassan's wife, Summer Hassan, and the Stroke Research and Education Foundation for their tireless work to raise awareness and expand community edu-

cation through events like the South Texas Comprehensive Stroke Symposium and the Red Ball fundraiser.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Valley Baptist Medical Center, Dr. Ameer Hassan, and the entire stroke care team for their groundbreaking contributions to medicine and their lasting impact on the health and well-being of families across South Texas.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DONALD
GEORGE LARSON

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Donald George Larson, who recently passed away at the age of 91. He was a beloved father, grandfather, and a pillar of the Fresno academic and civic communities.

Born on September 5, 1933, in San Francisco to Bengt John and Olive Larson, Donald grew up in Kerman, alongside his twin brother, Phillip and older brother, Galen.

A gifted student, Donald graduated early from Kerman High School and went on to earn degrees from College of the Sequoias, UC Berkeley, and Fresno State. During his time at Berkeley, Donald played in the Cal Band and served as the beloved mascot, Oski the Bear.

Donald found his true calling in education. He began teaching sixth grade in Caruthers and settled his way into a remarkable 35-year career at Fresno City College, where he taught history. Donald also taught current event classes for senior citizens from 1965 to 2010. His passion for civic engagement extended to local television, where he served as

a trusted political commentator beginning in 1980.

Donald believed deeply in the values of sportsmanship, mentorship, and community. He began scoring basketball games in 1948 and worked in the football chain gang at Fresno City College for over 30 years.

Beyond the classroom and field, Donald brought joy to those around him through small gestures and grand traditions, most notably his legendary Christmas light displays, which turned his home into a beacon of holiday cheer and community spirit year after year.

Donald held a lifelong fascination with Worlds' Fairs. His collection is housed at Fresno State's University Library and named in his honor. In recognition of his decades-long support of Fresno State, he was honored as the library's "Top Dog" in 2011.

As a man of deep and steady faith, Donald was a devoted member of First Covenant Church in Fresno, where he taught Sunday school since 1950.

In his final years, he shared a home with his granddaughter Jessica, her husband Trevor, and their children, a time marked by love, laughter and enduring connection.

Donald was preceded in death by his wife of 46 years, Carol Kratt Larson. He is survived by his daughter Lynn Roth and son-in-law Daniel Roth; his grandchildren Jennifer Roth and Jessica Bryant, along with Trevor Bryant, husband to Jessica; and his great-grandchildren Rachel, Charlotte, and Isaac Bryant.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and legacy of Mr. Donald George Larson. His legacy as an educator, historian, and man of faith will live on in the countless lives he touched. We extended our deepest condolences, thoughts, and prayers to his family and all who had the privilege of knowing him.