

Whereas, in 1938, the first school for African American children was established in Lithonia, Georgia under the name of the Lithonia Colored School which would become the Lithonia Colored High School and today is known as the Bruce Street School, the only school for African American children in Lithonia until 1968; and

Whereas, we celebrate and honor all of the graduates of the Bruce Street School; and

Whereas, we recognize them for their tenacity, community service and leadership in building a strong community that promotes education and family; and

Whereas, upon graduation, these students wrote their own stories by becoming productive citizens, serving in the Armed Services, as small business owners, educators, civic leaders, civil servants and community advocates, thus allowing our district to have pillars of wisdom and strength for many years to come; and

Whereas, the Bruce Street School graduates are distinguished citizens of our district, spiritual warriors, persons of compassion, fearless leaders and servants to all, but most of all citizens that desire to improve the lives of others; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize the Bruce Street School Classes of 1938 through 1968 as they celebrate their All Classes Reunion in Stone Mountain, Georgia; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby proclaim November 7, 2015 as: The Bruce Street School Day in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 7th day of November, 2015.

#### RECOGNIZING HISTORICAL BAYTOWN MEXICAN SCHOOL

**HON. BRIAN BABIN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2016*

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Baytown Mexican School for its distinction as an Official Texas Historical marker.

The Baytown Mexican School was founded in 1923 with the mission of teaching and nurturing Mexican-American children as they transitioned to English. The school, which was staffed by local students from Robert E. Lee High School, taught Mexican-American children until its closing in 1969.

In 1992, a new school was built as the successor to the Baytown Mexican School. Although the original three room schoolhouse has since been demolished, the dedication of this historical site will serve as an appropriate and lasting tribute to the Baytown Mexican School.

#### HONORING VETERAN EDISON THOMAS BROWN, JR.

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2016*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable veteran, Mr. Edison Thomas Brown, Jr.

U.S. Army Veteran Edison Thomas Brown, Jr. is a Mississippi native who was born and reared in the hills of Holmes County within the U.S. Second Congressional District.

Born in the very late 1950's, Mr. Brown, and other youth like him, grew up during the heat of oppression, segregation and poverty of the Holmes County 1960s civil rights movement. Yet, Mr. Brown says, he nor his family ever viewed themselves as underclass.

Although poor by economic standards and conditions, he and his siblings learned early of the importance of working hard to make a decent living by two nurturing parents, who were farmers themselves and who also worked for white farmers as well, picking cotton and such. His parents were Edison Thomas Brown, Sr. and Ednora Randle Brown (both now deceased).

His father was also a U.S. Army veteran who served in World War II. In fact, Mr. Brown says he was inspired to volunteer to serve his country in the military by his father and eldest brother James, a U.S. Army Vietnam veteran. After graduating from high school at what is formerly known as Tchula Attendance Center (TAC) in Tchula, MS, he began his military career in July, 1975 at Fort Knox, Ky.

During his tour of duty, he was trained and served as a Track Vehicle Mechanic, specializing in diesel repairs. His U.S. military career also included service in Gelnhausen, Germany.

While in the military, he earned the rank of Specialist 4th Class (SPEC 4). Proud to serve his country, Mr. Brown is grateful that his military career afforded him many travels that he would not have afforded to make and opportunities he possibly would not have had.

Mr. Brown's tour of duty concluded at Fort Stewart, GA in 1979; however, he remained in reserve status until 1981, when he received an Honorable Discharge.

After the military, Mr. Brown took advantage of the GI Bill and began to educate himself (part-time) in Electronic Service Technology coursework. Over the years, he has served in several employment capacities in the Metro Jackson area. His longest stint was with McRaes Distribution and its merging operations, 1985–2001.

Today, a Clinton, Miss, resident in the Second Congressional District, Mr. Brown spends most of his time actively serving in Holy Temple Baptist Church of West Jackson, pastored by the history-making Rev. Audrey Lynne Hall. At Holy Temple as a deacon, he is Chairman and also serves as Sunday School Superintendent and teacher. He, his wife, Gail, and son, Edison, III, have also participated in the church's ongoing Homeless Outreach Ministry in which the church gives toiletries, snacks and other needful items to the homeless once a month at Poindexter Park near Downtown Jackson.

Mr. Brown's favorite scripture of the Bible in which he tries to live by is Proverbs 3:5–6—“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a special Veteran, Mr. Edison Thomas Brown, Jr., for his dedication and support to the Holmes County Community.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF AUGUSTINE “GUS” ORTIZ VEGAS

**HON. MARK DeSAULNIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2016*

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleague Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, rise to recognize the life and service of Augustine “Gus” Ortiz Vegas, who served honorably for fifteen years with the Richmond Police Department in Contra Costa County.

A lifelong Bay Area resident, Mr. Vegas was born on August 8, 1957, in San Francisco and moved to nearby Vallejo as a young child. He was a member of the 1976 graduating class of St. Patrick's High School in Vallejo, where he excelled at track, football, and wrestling.

Those who knew Mr. Vegas admired him for his generosity and his empathy. Together with his wife Sandra, he ran a non-profit called Fostering Greatness that offered mentoring, clothing, and other resources to children in the local foster care system.

In his professional career, Mr. Vegas always focused on keeping others safe. His first job was as Operator at the Equilon refinery in Martinez, California, where he was also a rescue team member and auxiliary firefighter. In 1990, he graduated as the Valedictorian of the Napa Valley College Police Academy, and in 2001, began his career with the Richmond Police Department.

Officer Vegas applied his tremendous ability to connect with others to his work where he fully embodied the ideals of community policing. He went beyond simply deterring crime and arresting suspects to having genuine empathy and a connection to the community he served.

Officer Vegas's aptitude was recognized within the department and he became a property crimes detective rising through the department to become a homicide detective. In these roles, he was not only adept at solving crimes, but shined in his ability to provide empathy and closure for victims' families. Officer Vegas was versatile in his professional abilities due to his gift to connect with others. In his last assignment, he worked closely with agencies like the Richmond City Attorney's Office and the Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) to enforce the City of Richmond's Municipal Codes.

Officer Vegas cared deeply about his family and considered them the most important part of his life. Congressman THOMPSON and I send our deepest condolences to Officer Vegas' family, including Sandra, his wife of 32 years, their five sons, five daughters, and 22 grandchildren. Officer Vegas made a lasting impression on our community, and he will be greatly missed.

#### TRIBUTE TO MRS. BETTY DIXON

**HON. HENRY C. “HANK” JOHNSON, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2016*

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, Mrs. Betty Dixon was born on October 23, 1950 in Atlanta, Georgia and this

year she is celebrating a remarkable milestone reaching 65 years young; and

Whereas, Mrs. Dixon has been blessed with a long, happy life, devoted to God and credits it all to the Will of God, serving faithfully as a Deaconess and on the Hospitality Committee at Welcome Friend Baptist Church in Ellenwood, Georgia; and

Whereas, Mrs. Dixon is celebrating this day on her 65th Birthday with family, church members and friends at the Lou Walker Senior Center in Lithonia, Georgia; and

Whereas, she celebrates a life of blessings as a Wife, Mother, Grandmother, friend, community servant and leader; and

Whereas, the Lord has been her Shepherd, guiding her life for 65 years allowing her to lead by example, serve as one of God's chosen servants as a faithful matriarch and a community leader; and

Whereas, we are honored that she is celebrating today with family and friends giving generations of loved ones the opportunity to give thanks and display their love for the blessings that God has bestowed upon the Dixon family; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Mrs. Betty Dixon for an exemplary life which is an inspiration to all, now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby proclaim October 23rd, 2015 as: Mrs. Betty Dixon Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 23rd day of October, 2015.

IN HONOR OF THE HONORABLE  
JOHN E. McDONALD, JR., FIRST  
JUSTICE, EAST BOSTON MUNI-  
CIPAL COURT

### HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2016*

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of John E. McDonald, Jr., First Justice, East Boston Municipal Court, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to his hometown of Braintree and commend him for being named to the Judges Wall at The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law.

John Jr. is the son of John E. and Patricia M. McDonald who raised John Jr. in the Town of Braintree. John relocated to South Boston where he made his residence from 1984–2011, there he met and married his lovely wife Melissa, and had three children, Andrew 13, Jack 5, and Kathryn 4, before moving back to Braintree in 2011, where he and his family now reside.

John attended Boston College High School graduating in 1984. Upon graduating Boston College High School, John was accepted to Boston College where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree, in 1988. John was then accepted at prestigious Columbus School of Law at The Catholic University of America where he obtained his Juris Doctor in 1991.

Upon his passing the Massachusetts Bar Exam, John worked in the Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General as a Law Clerk. In 1991, John joined the Norfolk County District Attorney's Office as an Assistant District Attorney where he served from 1991 until

1994. In 1994, John went into private practice by opening the Law Office of John E. McDonald, Jr., focusing on his practice as a Sole Practitioner of Criminal and Civil Litigation from 1994–2008. Upon completing his successful private practice, John was named Assistant Clerk Magistrate, Boston Municipal Court, Central Division, where he served until his appointment by Governor Deval Patrick as an Associate Justice of the Central Division of the Boston Municipal Court in May of 2013. In February 2014, John served as the Presiding Justice of the Dorchester Division Drug Court until his appointment as the First Justice of East Boston Division Drug Court where he presently serves.

John E. McDonald, Jr., has dedicated his entire professional career to the field of Law. His reputation is impeccable as a judge who goes above and beyond in helping others. John's commitment to the East Boston Community is only exceeded by his love for family, and the betterment of those less fortunate. John has served as the keynote speaker at the Norfolk County Bar Association, The Salvation Army Recovery Program, The East Boston Chamber of Commerce, and has volunteered his time in speaking at many Boston area schools on the issue of substance abuse, and the law. In addition, The Honorable Judge John E. McDonald was also named as a panel member of the highly prestigious "Panel on Recovery" and was asked by Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh to speak before the City of Boston "Recovery Forum."

Mr. Speaker, John is known for his quick sense of humor, and is a true gentleman in every sense of the word. He has earned the respect of his peers, and when people look back on Judge McDonald's legacy they will remember him as a person who was there for those struggling in the most difficult circumstances. Although the honor of being named to the Judges Wall will be one highlight of many in John's career, he will most assuredly be known for his caring and positive impact on the families of East Boston, South Boston, and Braintree.

Mr. Speaker it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with John E. McDonald's family, friends, and contemporaries to thank him for his remarkable service and to commend him for the difference he has made to the families of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HONORING MR. VERNON AND MRS.  
SHIRLEY HILL

### HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2016*

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Vernon and Mrs. Shirley Hill of New Jersey's Third Congressional District as recipients of the Greater Philadelphia Area Leadership Award, and to express my sincerest gratitude to them for their continued service to our community.

The Greater Philadelphia Area Leadership Award recognizes business and community leaders who have demonstrated a strong commitment to the area through distinguished service and steadfast philanthropy. The Hill family has been active in various charitable

projects in the region through the operation of their family foundation. Whether it be their work with the University of Pennsylvania School Of Veterinary Medicine, or in supporting our troops through Operation Helmet, this award stands as a testament to their dedication to using their resources and experience to help promote the growth of society.

Mr. Speaker, the people of New Jersey's Third Congressional District are tremendously proud to have Vernon and Shirley Hill as involved members of their community. It is my honor to celebrate their recent Greater Philadelphia Area Leadership Award and recognize their personal and professional accomplishments, as well as their significant contributions to our community, before the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING DR. WILLIAM B.  
BYNUM, JR.

### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2016*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. William B. Bynum, Jr., a 25-year higher education professional, who was unanimously selected to be the 7th President of Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) by the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning Board on October 8, 2013 and he began his presidency at "The Valley" on November 6, 2013.

A native of Rocky Mount, N.C., Dr. Bynum earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Davidson College while on a student-athlete scholarship. While at Davidson, he also minored in Education and passed the National Teachers Exam. He was subsequently licensed and certified to teach Social Studies and Math in N.C. and Georgia. Dr. Bynum went on to earn his masters and Ph.D. in Sociology from Duke University while serving as a Duke Endowment Fellow. Dr. Bynum was also a member of the inaugural class of the NAFEO-Kellogg Leadership Fellows Program, a year-long program specifically designed to train the next generation of presidents/chancellors for minority serving institutions, which was led by then NAFEO president—Dr. Frederick Humphries; NAFEO chairman—Dr. Joe Johnson, and executive director—Dr. Arthur Thomas. As part of the program, Dr. Bynum "shadowed" Dr. Harold Martin, then chancellor of Winston-Salem State University and now chancellor of N.C. A & T State University.

As the 7th President, Dr. Bynum's vision for the University is to uplift 6 powerful words that are already deeply rooted in "The Valley" culture. The vision is: ONE GOAL. ONE TEAM. ONE VALLEY. The ONE GOAL is Student Success (increased enrollment, retention and graduation; holistic student development and career advancement); The ONE TEAM is University and Community Stakeholders Working Together; And the ONE VALLEY is students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends actively demonstrating School Pride and Spirituality that is second to none!

Prior to his appointment at MVSU, Dr. Bynum served as the Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Services at Morehouse College (2009–2013), where he