

Runners of We the Best Music Group, and with artists such as Lionel Richie, Mary J. Blige, Jay-Z, Beyonce, Usher, Mariah Carey, Drake, Rihanna, and many others. He has continued to expand his success and experience by crossing over into the world of AAA gaming, working on titles such as Madden NFL 20 and NBA Live 19.

CELEBRATING MERLE
WILBERDING'S GOLDEN ANNI-
VERSARY AT COOLIDGE WALL
LAW FIRM IN DAYTON, OHIO

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Merle Wilberding, a close friend from my Congressional district, who is celebrating 50 years as an attorney and partner at the law firm Coolidge Wall in Dayton, Ohio. Founded in 1853, Coolidge Wall is one of the oldest and most respected law firms in Ohio. Merle moved to Dayton after his discharge from the military, and officially joined the firm on June 25, 1973.

The values of hard work, integrity, and service to others have guided Merle throughout his long and distinguished career in the legal profession. Merle earned his law degree from the University of Notre Dame in 1969. After practicing law for 54 years, he remains at the very top of his profession, having earned the distinction of being named the 2023 "Lawyer of the Year" in Corporate Law for all of Dayton by the publication Best Lawyers. He is an active community leader and volunteer, a prolific free-lance writer, the author of seven books and numerous articles published in national law reviews, and has worked on multiple high-profile cases that gained national attention.

During the Vietnam War, Merle served four years as a Captain in the Judge Advocate General's Corps in Washington, D.C. As a 27-year-old U.S. Army lawyer, he represented the government in briefing and arguing the appeal of Lt. William Calley's court martial for his role in the My Lai Massacre and the Presidio Mutiny case, a non-violent anti-war demonstration at the Presidio Army Base in San Francisco. He represented the Army in 800 appeals and argued 100 cases. For his honorable service, he was awarded the Army Commendation Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal.

In 2008, a servicemember from our community, Maria Lauterbach, was murdered by a fellow marine after she reported a sexual assault. Merle offered to represent the Lauterbach family on a pro bono basis, and began his advocacy for victims of sexual assault in the military. Merle's work on this case resulted in multiple appearances on national news programs and testimony before the U.S. Congress. I teamed with Merle to seek justice for the Lauterbach family by pushing for changes in the Uniform Code of Military Justice and enacting new laws to combat sexual assault in the military, empower sexual assault victims, and establish a safer environment for all who serve in our Armed Forces.

Merle's wisdom, compassion, and knowledge of the law has repeatedly earned him the

respect of his peers. His name is routinely included in the annual lists of the Top 5 percent of Lawyers in the State of Ohio, and the Best Lawyers in America. He was inducted into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame and received the Distinguished Alumni Award from his alma mater, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, for his commitment to the values of service and ethical leadership that the University seeks to instill in its students.

In both his personal and professional life, Merle Wilberding has set an excellent example for all of us who work to serve our communities and our nation. I have had the privilege of knowing Merle for many years, and I am proud to call him my friend.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Merle Wilberding as he celebrates this significant milestone in his legal career.

HONORING AUDRIANNA JOHNSON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable servant, Audrianna Johnson.

Audrianna Johnson, also known as Audri Star, was born July 28, 1994, to Mr. and Mrs. Stephen and Sandra Johnson. She was raised in Grenada, MS, where she attended Grenada High School. While attending Grenada High School, Audri was a member of the well-known Grenada Marching Band.

Influenced by gospel and being raised in church, she began to write, produce, and record music at the age of 11. After graduating high school, Audri initially enrolled at Delta State University as a Nursing major, but later decided to major in Delta Music Institute (DMI). As a DMI student, she worked as a Mobile Music Lab assistant, leading group sessions with adolescents and teenagers as a mentor, songwriter, artist, producer, and engineer.

Audri graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Entertainment Industry Studies with a concentration of Entrepreneurship. After graduating from Delta State University, Audri joined the DMI staff as an administrative assistant and studio manager. She continues to perform across the states of Mississippi, Tennessee, Georgia, and Oklahoma.

Audri has received multiple nominations and awards including SEA Awards as Best Performance of the Year Nominee in 2020 and Best Female Rap Artist of the Year of 2020 at the Memphis Hip Hop Awards. In 2021, Audri joined Tymple as an Executive and Head of A&R. She engineered Tennessee State University's Aristocrat of Bands', recent Grammy Award winning album "The Urban Hymnal" for the Best Roots Gospel Album of the Year (2023). This album was produced and written by Sir the Baptist, Prof. Larry Jenkins, and Dubba-AA.

Audri plans to release new music as an artist and continue to be a part of changing the culture in the most positive way. Audri's motto: "You have to be what you want to see."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Audrianna Johnson for her

dedication and tenacity to serving her community and desire to be an example for all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify my position on H.R. 1093, the bill requiring State to submit a report to Congress on the impact of export controls on implementing the AUKUS partnership.

I voted NAY on Roll Call No. 144 when I intended to vote YEA.

REMEMBERING MARGOT STERN STROM

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recall Margot Stern Strom, a pioneer in Holocaust history teaching and a powerful advocate of anti-bigotry education. Ms. Strom passed on March 27 at her home in Brookline, Massachusetts. In 1975, as a seventh- and eighth-grade language arts teacher in Brookline, she and a colleague, Bill Parsons, attended a lecture on the Holocaust and realized how little they knew about it, and how little was being taught to adolescents. They founded Facing History and Ourselves which has developed curriculum on the Nazi atrocities before and during World War II. It has also taught about Jim Crow racial discrimination and Ku Klux Klan violence in the United States, the Armenian Genocide, apartheid, and other forms of bigotry and antisemitism, including more recent tutorials on the Tree of Life Synagogue massacre in Pittsburgh and the George Floyd murder in Minnesota. Facing History has reached tens of thousands of students and teachers over the years. The daughter of parents who operated a furniture store in my hometown of Memphis, Ms. Strom graduated from the University of Illinois—Champaign-Urbana in 1964 and eventually moved to Massachusetts to teach. She retired as executive director of Facing History in 2014. I extend my condolences to her daughter, Rachel, her son, Adam, her extended family, and her many inspired colleagues, supporters and friends.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BLAKE D. MOORE

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 185, and YEA on Roll Call No. 186.

CELEBRATING MR. CAAL SKONOS UPON HIS GRADUATION AND COMMISSION

HON. HALEY M. STEVENS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Caal Skonos upon his achievement of Army Second Lieutenant ranking in the United States Army. The awarding of this rank signifies years of hard work and dedication to serving our country, and it is a pleasure to celebrate Mr. Caal Skonos as he accepts this distinction.

Mr. Caal Skonos has been honorably serving the United States as an active service member for almost a decade. While dedicating himself to our Nation's defense, Mr. Caal Skonos continued sharpening the skills the military developed within him as a leader and professional by also attending Eastern Michigan University to pursue a degree in Political Science with a focus in International Relations. A few short years later, it is a pleasure to now celebrate Mr. Caal Skonos as he graduates from Eastern Michigan University at the end of April and assumes his commission as 2LT Caal Skonos, Military Intelligence Officer.

Earning this rank is a remarkable accomplishment, and it is a pleasure to join with Mr. Skonos' friends, family, and community to congratulate him upon the occasion of this significant career milestone. His passion and commitment to serving our country is a testament to his character, and there is no doubt that he will continue to succeed in his life of service.

Mr. Caal Skonos' dedication and service to our country is an inspiration to many, and the entire country is grateful for the selfless sacrifice and commitment to our Nation that is demonstrated daily by brave military service members like Mr. Caal Skonos. I ask my colleagues to share their congratulations and thanks with Mr. Caal Skonos as he embarks upon this next, exciting chapter of life.

HONORING ROBERT ERVES

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a tenacious and self-motivated leader, Robert Eves. Robert Eves has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication, and a desire to achieve.

Eves coached Vicksburg's football, track, and powerlifting teams at levels ranging from eighth grade to varsity for nearly 30 years. He had an undefeated season with Vicksburg's eighth-grade football team and led the school's powerlifting team to the MHSAA Class 5A championship in 2003.

Eves also had a standout football career as a student in the VVSD. He played at Temple High School, then Warren Central from 1969 to 1972, before starring at Mississippi Valley State.

Eves was inducted into the 2022 Vicksburg Warren School District Athletic Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Robert Eves for his passion

and dedication to the Vicksburg Warren School District.

RECOGNIZING THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN PRESIDENT LINES

HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate American President Lines on its 175th Anniversary. Founded on April 18, 1848 as the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, the company began with three ships and ran the first shipping line between Panama and California. Authorized by Congress under the Mail Steamer Bill in 1847, Pacific Mail operated under a U.S. contract to carry mail from Panama City to the west coast.

In 1867, the Pacific Mail Steamship Company's SS *Colorado* was the first steamship to start regular service across the Pacific sailing from San Francisco to Yokohama and Hong Kong. In the 1880's and 1890's Pacific Mail modernized its ships again replacing iron-hulled ships with steel and installing electric lighting on the SS *Columbia*, the first ship in the world to have electric power.

In 1921, the company renamed ships after presidents, with the first five named as the President Cleveland, President Lincoln, President Pierce, President Taft, and President Wilson. These ships were sold to Dollar Steamship Lines in 1925, where they continued in the TransPacific service and expanded the line with seven additional ships named after presidents Adams, Garfield, Harrison, Hayes, Monroe, Polk, and Van Buren.

Under new management in 1938, the name was changed to American President Lines with an eagle as a mascot. American President Lines played a critical role in World War II by managing ships for the newly created War Shipping Administration and transporting troops and materiel in support of the war effort. Through World War II, APL lost nine vessels due to enemy attack or stranding in war zones.

As the world's post-war economy grew, American President Lines provided around-the-world cargo and passenger services and was a leader in Transpacific transportation between the U.S. west coast and Asia. Ever since, American President Lines has led industry innovation by pioneering containerized transport, developing the concept of seamless integrated intermodal service, implementing stacked containers on rail cars to improve operations and efficiency, deploying the use of RFID tags to track shipments, and, as a partner with the United States government, supporting critical sealift capabilities and U.S. military operations and personnel around the world.

We are proud to have American President Lines headquartered in Virginia, and I want to again congratulate American President Lines, their employees, and the U.S. merchant mariners who crew the ships, on their 175 year heritage and remarkable legacy.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, on the afternoon of April 19, 2023, I was unavoidably detained in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Passage of H.J. Res. 42, and YEA on H.R. 1149.

SUPPORTING FREEDOM IN RUSSIA

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I met with Evgenia Kara-Murza, the courageous wife of Russian patriot Vladimir Kara-Murza, and Kara-Murza's Moscow attorney Vadim Prokhorov, along with Bill Browder, the visionary sponsor of the Magnitsky Act. We discussed the outrageous sentencing of Vladimir Kara-Murza which has been so accurately exposed in the following lead editorial of the Washington Post yesterday.

The sentencing of our opinions contributor, Vladimir Kara-Murza, to a quarter-century in prison on Monday by a Moscow court, raises three very loud alarms. The first is that his health is fragile and he might not survive 25 years in prison. The second is that Mr. Kara-Murza, who committed no crime, received one of the harshest sentences since Joseph Stalin's time, a shocking, vengeful strike from President Vladimir Putin. And lastly, the time has come for the United States—not only because he represents this country's democratic values, but also because he and others like him are the best hope for a free, post-Putin Russia.

Mr. Kara-Murza should be designated by the United States as unlawfully or wrongfully detained, which will facilitate negotiating a prisoner exchange with Russia. Mr. Kara-Murza is a permanent resident of the United States, and his wife, Evgenia Kara-Murza, and three children, are U.S. citizens. He clearly meets the requirements for such a designation, which Ms. Kara-Murza has been seeking for months. She told us Mr. Kara-Murza would accept an exchange, and recalled that dissidents were sometimes swapped during the Cold War.

Mr. Kara-Murza returned to Moscow last year, knowing the risks he faced. He did nothing wrong. He has committed free speech, not treason. His arrest, conviction and sentencing were entirely contrived.

However, his deteriorating condition is real. He was the target of attempted poisoning in 2015 and 2017 by Russia's secret services, using some kind of nerve agent, and now suffers from polyneuropathy, caused by damage to the peripheral nerves throughout the body. The numbness began on his left side and is spreading to his right, with loss of feeling in both feet and his left hand. According to one of his lawyers, Vadim Prokhorov, this malady should preclude being incarcerated in a Russian prison, but so far the wardens have turned a deaf ear to his appeals. "I do realize that he doesn't have five years, let alone 25" in prison, Ms. Kara-Murza told us. "Now it is a question of life and death."

"If we lose him, if we lose people like Vladimir, who is going to be there to rebuild