

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING PA-1'S HOMETOWN  
HERO: ELLEN SARACINI

**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 29, 2024*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary individual from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—someone who has gone above and beyond the call of duty in service to both our community and our country. It is with great respect and admiration that I recognize Ellen Saracini, one of our district's distinguished Hometown Heroes.

Hometown Heroes are not defined by titles or accolades, but by the quiet power of their actions. They are distinguished by their unwavering integrity, the strength of their character, and their steadfast commitment to the people and places they serve. They are the foundation upon which our communities stand—the ones who lift others up, inspire hope, and, in doing so, call us all to higher standards of service and compassion. Ellen Saracini has embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

Ellen's determination has truly moved mountains and skies and transformed tragedy into triumph. On September 11, 2001, Captain Victor Saracini was piloting United Airlines Flight 175 when his plane was hijacked and deliberately flown into the South Tower of the World Trade Center. That day, Ellen lost her husband, her daughters lost their father, and their lives forever changed. Yet, from this unimaginable sorrow, Ellen emerged as a formidable force of strength and resilience. Over the past 23 years, she has channeled her grief into powerful advocacy for aviation safety, driven by a singular mission: to ensure that no other family endures the pain she has known. Her tireless efforts have redefined air travel safety standards and ensured our pilots, crews, and passengers are safe in the skies.

Since joining Congress, it has been my profound honor to partner with Ellen in that fight. In 2018, we achieved a milestone by securing my amendment in the FAA Reauthorization, mandating secondary barriers on all newly manufactured aircraft. Although we celebrated that victory, industry resistance stalled the retrofitting of existing fleets, but Ellen, with her unwavering spirit and relentless drive, would not accept defeat. We doubled down on our efforts, and earlier this year, the Saracini Enhanced Aviation Safety Act became law as part of the 2024 FAA Reauthorization. This bipartisan legislation ensures secondary barriers are now required on all aircraft—new and existing—preventing future tragedies and saving countless lives. It was a victory forged by our shared resolve and Ellen's extraordinary perseverance, strength, and courage.

Ellen's determination to create lasting change did not stop there. With the same strength and resolve that carried her through unimaginable loss, she turned her grief into

action once again—this time to heal our community. Ellen led the charge to establish the Garden of Reflection 9/11 Memorial, a sanctuary built to honor the 18 Bucks County residents and the 2,973 souls lost on that tragic day. Today, this beautiful 2.5-acre memorial is Pennsylvania's official 9/11 memorial and draws visitors from across our country. It serves as a place of healing, reflection, and unity—a lasting tribute only made possible through Ellen's unshakable resolve.

Ellen exemplifies the profound power of resilience, strength, and purposeful action. Her unwavering commitment has revolutionized aviation safety and provided solace to countless families, demonstrating that even in our darkest hours, we can find light and enact meaningful change.

In times of uncertainty, it is the work of individuals like Ellen Saracini that reminds us of the strength of the human spirit. Today, we honor Ellen Saracini not just for their remarkable deeds, but for who she is—a true hero, in every sense of the word.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to Ellen Saracini for her extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this exceptional individual, whose leadership and spirit of service will inspire generations to come. May their example remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.

HONORING THE CAREER OF  
MARGARET MIMS

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 29, 2024*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Sheriff Margaret Mims after 42 years of valiant leadership and public service.

A true call to service, Margaret was a single mother working as a student aide at a local high school when she received a call in the night. On the other end was the incoming Police Chief of Kerman who shared his intentions to hire the city's first female officer. Recognizing the opportunity, Margaret applied for the position and her career in law enforcement began in January of 1980 when she was sworn in by her father to be a police officer for the City of Kerman.

In 1983, she then joined the Fresno County Sheriff's Office as a Deputy Sheriff. Following her move, Margaret never looked back as she made her way up the ranks of Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, and Assistant Sheriff, becoming the first woman to achieve each position until she was finally elected to Sheriff in 2006.

Upon taking the Oath on her grandmother's Bible, Mims became Fresno County's first female elect as well and has now been re-elected three times since. Over her 16 years as

acting Sheriff, Margaret has worked tirelessly to ensure the safety of both her officers and the residents of Fresno County. Keen on providing stability within the force, Sheriff Mims' leadership approach has allowed her to carry out this task through the good times and the bad.

Additionally, Sheriff Mims has gone above and beyond her call to duty to not just defend residents but defend their constitutional rights as well. A voice of reason, she has taken the discussion of immigration reform and sanctuary state status all the way to the White House, meeting with both President Obama and President Trump during their terms. She has also worked diligently with county departments such as the Fresno County Board of Supervisors and the County Administrative Office to ensure the voices and concerns of the public are being heard.

Sheriff Mims has transpired the expectations of a Sheriff and empowered the community in the process. In recognition of her efforts, she was the recipient of the Fresno Exchange Club's Top Cop award in 1998, was selected to Fresno County's Top Ten Professional Women of the Year in 1999, and received the 2001 Breaking the Glass Ceiling Award from the National Center for Women in Policing.

Sheriff Mims is happily married to her husband, Gary, and they have two children and two grandchildren. Her retirement is well-deserved and will be spent enjoying her family and especially her grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Sheriff Margaret Mims for her outstanding public service and tireless dedication to the community. May we continue to be inspired by her service.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF  
TERENCE "BOOBOO" RATCHFORD

**HON. RALPH NORMAN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 29, 2024*

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Terence Ratchford, BooBoo, who passed on July 26, 2024, and his years of incredible dedication and exemplary work for the 5th District of South Carolina. Raised in Gaffney, South Carolina by his parents Ruby Hemphill and Warren Ratchford. BooBoo always felt a deep connection with his community. He began volunteering his time at a young age, and was known to be willing to help "whenever and wherever."

As a child, he attended Limestone Missionary Baptist Church and later joined Greater Hope Ministries. He loved his church and his church family and displayed a deep commitment to serving it well. He was a leader in religious programs, choir, and Bible studies. His impact on the churches he attended will last for generations. As an active member of his community, BooBoo volunteered his time at many Chamber events, community service

• 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.

projects. and at the Gaffney hospital. He served at the Peach Festival and played a large role in ensuring that the great city of Gaffney was celebrated each year.

BooBoo coached football at Gaffney High School for over 20 years. He was referred to as the "Get Back Coach" and was beloved by coaches and players alike. He also volunteered for the Blacksburg Middle School girl's basketball team and sponsored a wrestling event for the middle school.

BooBoo wore many different hats. He was a God-fearing man, a leader, friend, son, and coach. He served in each of these roles with kindness and joy. He will be deeply missed. Please join me in expressing my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to BooBoo.

RECOGNIZING PA-1'S HOMETOWN  
HERO: CHRISTINE ELBERSON

**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 29, 2024*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary individual from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—someone who has gone above and beyond the call of duty in service to both our community and our country. It is with great respect and admiration I recognize Christine Elbersen, one of our district's distinguished Hometown Heroes.

Hometown Heroes are not defined by titles or accolades but by the quiet power of their actions. They are distinguished by their unwavering integrity, the strength of their character, and their steadfast commitment to the people and places they serve. They are the foundation upon which our communities stand—the ones who lift others up, inspire hope, and, in doing so call us all to higher standards of service and compassion. Christine Elbersen has embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

For the past seventeen years, Christine has taught tenth-grade social studies at Bensalem High School and has made it her mission to enrich her students' lives beyond the classroom. Known for her uncanny ability to develop meaningful relationships, Chrissy has mastered the balance of truly caring for her students while letting them know the importance of accountability. In her classroom, she instills confidence, inspires curiosity, provides enriching guidance, and challenges her students to seize every opportunity with a positive and joyful attitude. As her colleague Elena Toselli put it, "Christine is the teacher kids come back and visit time after time—she's one of those teachers who students will remember years from now because she made them feel valued and shaped who they were." Christine's efforts earned her the prestigious title of Bensalem's 2024 Teacher of the Year, a meaningful distinction voted upon by her peers, staff, and students. Christine demonstrates that it is teachers who are the architects of dreams, propelling our next generation of leaders toward success and greatness.

It is the work of individuals like Christine Elbersen that reminds us of the power of the human spirit. Her service, given without expectation of recognition, stands as a testament to the belief that one individual dedication can

ripple through the lives of many, sparking change, fostering resilience, and inspiring hope. Today, we honor Christine Elbersen not just for her remarkable deeds but for who she is—a true hero in every sense of the word.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to Christine Elbersen for her extraordinary service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this exceptional individual, whose leadership and spirit of service will inspire generations to come. May her example remind us of the boundless potential within each of us to make our communities, country, and world a better place.

FLORIDA'S 16TH CONGRESSIONAL  
DISTRICT VETERAN COMMENDATION

**HON. VERN BUCHANAN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 29, 2024*

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a group of veterans for their military and community service.

Our veterans have sacrificed much in the defense of our Nation. Many of them retired their uniforms but continue their service by helping others in their community.

Three years ago, I established the 16th District Congressional Veteran Commendation to recognize the heroic wartime sacrifices and admirable peacetime community involvement of my constituents. These are exceptional Americans. I appreciate the opportunity to honor them for their service to the Nation and community.

An independent panel reviewed several nominations and chose the following thirty veterans for their wartime and post-military service:

Angel Alvarez of Riverview who served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam and Gulf Wars

Angelo Barnello Sr. of Riverview who served in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II

Stephen Browning of Apollo Beach who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War

Delford Connell of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Navy during World War II  
Geoffrey Cordes of Bradenton who served in the U.S. Army during the Gulf War

Angel Davila Lopez of Lithia who served in the U.S. Army during the Gulf War

Harry Demeza of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Army during World War II  
Jerry Estes of Wimauma who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War

Brenda Gaines of Bradenton who served in the U.S. Army outside of war times

Jeffrey Gaines of Bradenton who served in the U.S. Army during the Gulf War

Lloyd Grable of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Army during World War II

Dwain Hannah of Brandon who served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War

William Hodges of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Air Force outside of war times

Carl Hunsinger of Palmetto who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Gulf War

Bruce Johnson of Valrico who served in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War

William Kirkpatrick of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam and Gulf Wars

Jim Klocke of Bradenton who served in the U.S. Coast Guard during the Vietnam War

Maurice Lanouette of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Army during World War II

Robert Marasco of Valrico who served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Gulf War

Thomas Moncrief of Apollo Beach who served in the U.S. Air Force outside of war times

Joseph Muhlberger of Valrico who served in the U.S. Air Force outside of war times

Jerry Neff of Bradenton who served in the U.S. Army outside of war times

Sean Powers of Bradenton who served in the U.S. Marine Corps outside of war times

Robert Putnam of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War

Thomas Reichard of Valrico who served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Gulf War and outside of war times

Gill Ruderman of Bradenton who served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War

Milton Shattuck of Bradenton who served in the U.S. Army during the Korean, Vietnam, and Gulf Wars

Vincent Spanicciati of Lakewood Ranch who served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Vietnam War

George Tamburello of Wimauma who served in the U.S. Army during World War II

Lonnie Vona of Valrico who served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam and Gulf Wars and outside of war times

HONORING THE LIFE OF MARY  
KATHRYN PITMAN

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 29, 2024*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the remarkable life and enduring legacy of Mary Kathryn Pitman, a pioneering figure in the agricultural industry and a woman whose contributions have left an indelible mark on her community and beyond. With heavy hearts, we mourn the loss of Mary Pitman, who passed away on April 5, 2023, at the age of 72, leaving behind a profound impact on the world of organic poultry farming.

Mary Kathryn (Abbott) Pitman was born on February 16, 1951, in Hanford, California, to James Edward Abbott and Mary Imogene Staires. Her early years were shaped by a nurturing family environment, which instilled in her the values of hard work, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. After graduating from Hanford High School in 1969, Mary pursued her passion for education at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in early childhood education.

In 1973, she began her journey as the devoted wife of Richard Pitman, the son of Don Pitman, the founder of Pitman Family Farms. Their love story and shared vision for the future of the family business led to a union that would span nearly 50 years, as well as an extraordinary partnership in transforming the poultry industry.

Pitman Family Farms, established in 1954 by her father-in-law, Don Pitman, started as a