

work on behalf of every constituent in Minnesota's Third Congressional District. In August, Zehra departed my office for a new opportunity to attend Columbia University Graduate School of Arts and Science for Political Science, and I could not be more proud or grateful for her service.

As a Minnesota District Three native, Zehra grew up in the district she so proudly served. After graduating from The Blake School, she attended and graduated from the University of Minnesota earning her Bachelor of Arts degree in political science. Her public service spans time working in State Legislative Offices and at the federal level. Zehra has strong ties to her cultural identity and community. She has a passion for global women's issues, even serving as a delegate to the 68th UN Commission on The Status of Women.

Zehra's colleagues have had the honor of watching her evolve from a shy intern to a confident, capable Staff Assistant during her time in the office. Equally adept with pop culture critiques and international affairs analysis, Zehra has made our office both smarter and more relevant. Her deep roots in MN-03 allow her to both connect with constituents and offer the best local restaurant recommendations.

The people of Minnesota's Third Congressional District were lucky to have her dedication and leadership, and she is dearly missed. However, we look forward to watching her succeed in graduate school and beyond.

HONORING CAPTAIN ERIK E.
ANDERSON

HON. PETE STAUBER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the 50th birthday of Captain Erik E. Anderson.

Captain Anderson was born on December 1, 1974. Raised in Lafayette, Louisiana, Captain Anderson graduated from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps in 1997 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering. He first served aboard USS *Hopper* (DDG 70) from 1998 to 1999, completing the ship's maiden deployment, a dry-docking availability, and surface warfare officer qualification.

After serving on the USS *Hopper*, he completed the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program's nuclear pipeline training and reported to his second division officer tour on USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) from 2001 to 2003. He completed the ship's "Iron Man" Cruise in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and became a Nuclear Engineer Officer.

Captain Anderson was selected for shore duty at Naval Reactors' Headquarters in Washington, DC, where he worked from 2003 to 2006 on advanced technology Insertion projects for CVN 68 Class ships' propulsion plant, preliminary designs for USS *Gerald R Ford* (CVN 78), and test programs for west coast CVNs and ex-Enterprise (CVN 65).

During this time, he attended graduate school at The Catholic University of America, earning a Master of Engineering Degree in Engineering Management.

From late 2006 to 2011, Captain Anderson served as the Assistant Program Manager for

ex-Enterprise in the Naval Reactors' Program Office for Surface Ships. During this time, he led the planning and execution of the ship's last major dry-docking availability, allowing the ship to complete two more deployments prior to her removal service. He also led early planning and budgeting efforts for the one-of-a-kind defueling and inactivation of ex-Enterprise.

Captain Anderson then transferred to the Nuclear Technology Division as the Director of Radiological Controls from 2011 to 2014. He was responsible for the radiation protection of all sailors, workers, the public, and the environment from the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program's radioactivity on all ships, prototypes, shipyards, bases, DOE laboratories, and the Naval Reactors Facility. He also assisted with the Naval Reactors' support of the U.S. Navy's Operation Tomodachi in response to the nuclear accidents at Fukushima.

From late 2014 to mid-2023, Captain Anderson assumed duties as the Program Manager for the Naval Reactors Facility in Idaho, where he led the Naval Reactors' efforts to publish the draft and final Environmental Impact Statements for the recapitalization of spent fuel handling in Idaho, a three billion dollar major construction project. He has also led the Naval Reactors Facility fleet support mission in Idaho to process, examine, and package naval spent nuclear fuel in accordance with stringent Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program requirements, fleet schedules, and commitments to the State of Idaho.

In July 2023, Captain Anderson transferred to the Acting Deputy Director for Governmental Affairs. In February 2024, he was selected as the Director for Governmental Affairs, where he oversees multiple aspects of the Naval Reactors' Congressional Affairs efforts.

Captain Anderson's decorations include two Meritorious Service Medals and other individual and unit awards. His wife, Ania, and son, Aksel, consider him the head and the heart of their family.

On December 1, 2024, Captain Anderson celebrated his 50th birthday. I thank Captain Anderson for his service and congratulate him for reaching this important milestone. I hope this next chapter is filled with as much adventure as the last.

RECOGNIZING STARK COUNTY
COMMISSIONER JANET WEIR
CREIGHTON

HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to Commissioner Janet Weir Creighton for her service as a Stark County Commissioner, and my sincere gratitude for all that she has done for the people of Ohio's 13th Congressional District, the "Birthplace of Champions." I have appreciated her partnership as we worked together to expand opportunity and deliver results for our shared constituents.

Her drive to lead is commendable, and I have no doubt that she has bettered countless lives as a result of her steadfast service. Throughout her 40 years in public service, she

has proven to be a true advocate and leader. She led by example through her perseverance, compassion, and dedication in her role in the community and those she served.

As a woman in a position of influence, and sometimes the first woman in her various roles throughout her career, she has undoubtedly inspired the coming generation of young women to stand strong for what they believe in and strive for positions of leadership.

For her outstanding devotion, she has earned the respect and esteem of many, and in the wake of her departure, I know her numerous contributions will not be forgotten. I am confident that her fine character and decisive leadership will be sorely missed.

As she goes on to continue serving our community in new ways, I wish her all the best in her future endeavors. Again, on behalf of Ohio's 13th Congressional District, I would like to thank Commissioner Janet Weir Creighton for her commitment to the people of Stark County and to Northeast Ohio.

CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COM-
MENDATION FOR CHARLES E.
RICHMOND II

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lieutenant Charles E. Richmond II of Rockwall, Texas, and award him a Congressional Veteran Commendation. Lieutenant Richmond honorably served in the United States Army for over twenty years, both in an Active Duty role and as a reservist.

Lieutenant Richmond began his distinguished career in the United States Army, where he served with honor and distinction. During his time serving our country, he demonstrated exceptional leadership, strategic thinking, and a deep commitment to the values that define the Army—loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. Over the course of his military service, Lieutenant Richmond participated in numerous assignments, missions, and operations, always prioritizing the safety and well-being of his fellow soldiers and the nation he swore to defend. His ability to lead with integrity, his tactical acumen, and his ability to adapt to the challenges of military service earned him the admiration of peers and superiors alike.

After his service in the Army, Lieutenant Richmond transitioned seamlessly into a new chapter of service as a police officer. For more than twenty years, he served in this demanding and high-pressure role with the same dedication to protecting and serving his community. As a law enforcement officer, Lieutenant Richmond stood as a pillar of strength, always striving to maintain order, promote safety, and foster positive relationships between law enforcement and the public. His presence on the force was marked by a steadfast commitment to justice, an unwavering respect for human dignity, and a tireless work ethic. Whether responding to critical incidents or mentoring younger officers, Lieutenant Richmond demonstrated the qualities of a leader and a servant, working tirelessly to ensure that the community remained safe and secure.

Throughout his career, Lieutenant Richmond exemplified what it means to be a public servant. His courage, resilience, and professionalism set a standard for others to follow. The impact of his service will be felt for many years to come, as the countless lives he touched—whether as a soldier or as a police officer—will continue to carry the lessons he imparted through his actions and leadership.

Lieutenant Richmond is also an exemplary father and husband. Throughout his career, he worked hard to ensure that his family was taken care of, and that they had all of the opportunities.

I am honored to represent Lieutenant Richmond in Texas' 4th Congressional District. It is a privilege to award him the Congressional Veteran Commendation for his service to our Nation and to the people of North Texas.

COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S PIPELINE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA).

On June 10, 1999, a pipeline leak caused a massive explosion in my district in Bellingham, Washington. The rupture released more than a quarter million gallons of gasoline into Whatcom Creek. The gasoline ignited, sending a fireball racing down the creek that killed two 10-year-old boys and an 18-year-old young man. The two boys, Stephen Tsiervas and Wade King, were playing in a creek near their homes on an idyllic summer day, and the young man, Liam Wood, had just graduated from high school and was fly-fishing for trout.

The American people, including my constituents in response to the tragic Bellingham incident, justifiably raised safety concerns that there was not enough federal oversight of pipelines and hazardous materials. In response, Congress created PHMSA within the Department of Transportation in 2004 to do just that, as part of the Norman Y. Mineta Research and Special Programs Improvement Act, which was signed into law on November 30, 2004.

Twenty years after the 2004 creation of this new modal administration specifically focused on pipeline and hazardous materials transportation safety, PHMSA continues its work. This includes overseeing \$1 billion in pipeline safety grants as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law so communities can repair or replace aging, leak-prone natural gas pipeline infrastructure while creating jobs, reducing methane emissions and keeping communities safe.

Last December, the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee passed a bipartisan pipeline safety reauthorization bill to ensure PHMSA and state pipeline safety inspectors have the resources they need. This legislation increases transparency and accountability from pipeline operators and supports emerging

technology in pipelines, including for carbon dioxide and hydrogen.

I am grateful for PHMSA's two decades of work and the agency's ongoing commitment to protecting people and the environment by advancing the safe transportation of energy and other hazardous materials that are essential to daily life.

In the 119th Congress, I look forward to a bipartisan effort to reauthorize the work of PHMSA's Office of Pipeline Safety, as we have for the past two decades. More work remains, including ensuring first responders have the training they need to address accidents and incidents where hazardous materials are released whether that is by pipeline, rail, or any other mode of transportation. Safety is a need in every community in every Congressional District and in my role in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I will continue to work to reach common ground to enhance safety for all Americans. I thank PHMSA for its ongoing work to do the same.

HONORING JORGE CORTEZ

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mr. Jorge Cortez, who passed away on November 11, 2024, at the age of 81. Known for his signature red apron, white guayabera and white hat, Jorge was not just an icon of San Antonio's culinary world but also a visionary artist and a champion of the city's vibrant cultura. A proud son of my hometown of San Antonio, Mr. Cortez leaves behind his seven children—Pete, Deborah, Christina, Paloma, Cariño, Alexandra, and Sol Jorge, twelve grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

In 1941, Mr. Cortez's parents, Pedro and Cruz, purchased a small three-table café that would become an iconic and beloved community institution. Mi Tierra Café was more than a place to dine—it became a haven for comunidad, filled with música, murals, and the aromas of their authentic comida. After their father passed away in 1984, Mr. Cortez and his siblings committed themselves to preserving and expanding his legacy, creating a thriving business rooted in honoring and promoting their Latino culture. Under their leadership, La Familia Cortez grew to include five beloved restaurants, employing more than 600 San Antonians. Mr. Cortez's creative spark was also behind the invention of sizzling fajitas, a dish that has become synonymous with Tex-Mex cuisine.

Mr. Cortez was more than a restaurateur; he was an artist and a visionary leader who believed in using art and culture to uplift the community. His artistry extended beyond the murals of Mi Tierra to shape the cultural fabric of downtown San Antonio. Mr. Cortez played a key role in the establishment of Zona Cultural, a 44-block historic district designated by the City of San Antonio and the State of Texas that celebrates the diversity, creativity, and commerce of San Antonio. His vision for Zona Cultural transformed it into a hub of heritage and innovation, ensuring that future generations could experience and cherish the richness of the city's history.

La Familia Cortez is the definition of the American dream, and the Cortez family continues to shape San Antonio for the better. Mr. Cortez was a lively and much-admired member of our community, and he will be greatly missed.

RECOGNIZING JUDGE PATRICIA DELANEY

HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to Judge Patricia Delaney for her service on the 5th District Court of Appeals, and my sincere gratitude for all that she has done for the people of Ohio's 13th Congressional District, the "Birthplace of Champions." I have appreciated her partnership as we worked together to expand opportunity and deliver results for our shared constituents.

Her drive to lead is commendable, and I have no doubt that she has bettered countless lives as a result of her steadfast service. Throughout her time in office, she proved to be a true public servant and leader. She led by example through her perseverance, compassion, and dedication to her role in the community.

As she goes on to continue serving our community in new ways, I wish her all the best in her future endeavors. On behalf of Ohio's 13th Congressional District, I thank her for her commitment to the people of Northeast Ohio.

CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION FOR JEFFREY WILEY

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Major Jeffrey Wiley and award him a Congressional Veteran Commendation. In honor of Major Jay Wiley's dedicated 20-year career in the United States Army, we extend our deepest gratitude for his exemplary service. Hailing from Rockwall, Texas, Major Wiley's commitment to duty and country reflects an unwavering dedication to safeguarding our Nation and advancing military operations both at home and abroad.

Throughout his distinguished career, Major Wiley served as a Signals Officer, Detachment Commander, and Operations Officer. His roles required significant expertise and responsibility, overseeing multi-national and joint-service intelligence activities and ensuring seamless coordination across multiple defense sectors. His leadership was vital to the success of intelligence operations, bringing together personnel from various branches and nations, and enabling information sharing at critical moments in support of national security. His knowledge and strategic vision in air defense systems also enhanced our military's operational effectiveness and strengthened our national defense posture.

In 1991, Major Wiley deployed to Kuwait, where he contributed to the coalition efforts