

When factories and plants closed in San Antonio, they created job-training programs and worked with businesses to bring more high-paying jobs to the City. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the COPS/Metro Alliance founded an unprecedented education and job placement program called “SA Ready to Work”, offering over 28,000 San Antonio residents job placement, support, and retention services, and tuition for high school equivalency, college degrees, and industry-recognized certifications: the first of its kind in the Nation.

While great strides have been made in the last few decades to make San Antonio a more equitable city, there is still more work to be done. As the Representative for Texas’s 35th Congressional District, I know that the COPS/Metro Alliance will continue its incredible legacy of uplifting the most disadvantaged among us, and work to create an even greater San Antonio.

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RECOGNIZING CHRISTIAN COUNTY,  
MISSOURI, TREASURER KAREN  
MATTHEWS ON HER RETIREMENT

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**HON. ERIC BURLISON**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 10, 2024*

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Karen Matthews, the Christian County, Missouri, Treasurer, on her retirement. Christian County is home to nearly 90,000 citizens in the southwest part of Missouri, and Ms. Matthews has served as an elected official there for 22 years.

During her tenure, Ms. Matthews has achieved many accomplishments. She manages nearly \$50 million annually in county revenue and transitioned the county’s operations from a third-class county to a first-class county due to the area’s population growth. She initiated online banking for the county, direct deposit payroll for county employees and implemented premier financial software. She also saved the county thousands of dollars by implementing a more efficient time and attendance software. Finally, despite the millions of annual transactions, the county has successfully passed all of its dozens of audits with 100-percent compliance.

Ms. Matthews was honored by her peers by being elected as the treasurer for the Missouri County Treasurer’s Association, a position she has held since 2012. She also is the treasurer for Mt. Zion Baptist Church, serves on the Missouri County Treasurer’s Association legislative board and is a member of several area chambers of commerce. In addition to her public service, she has been the co-owner of several small businesses in the construction and home design fields.

I’d like to congratulate Ms. Matthews on her well-deserved retirement. She has faithfully executed her responsibilities as county treasurer and she will be missed. I wish her the very best in the next phase of her life.

RECOGNIZING MY SUBCOMMITTEE  
STAFF DIRECTOR, SOPHIE  
MIRVISS, FOR HER EXCELLENT  
WORK ON BEHALF OF MIN-  
NESOTA’S THIRD CONGRES-  
SIONAL DISTRICT

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**HON. DEAN PHILLIPS**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 10, 2024*

Mr. PHILLIPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my Staff Director, Sophie Mirviss, for her work on behalf of every constituent in Minnesota’s Third Congressional District. In October, Sophie departed my office for a new opportunity to serve as the Chief of Staff to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East and I could not be more proud or grateful for her service.

Sophie’s journey as a public servant began just after she graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 2018 with a bachelor’s degree in international studies and a minor in economics. Though she was initially hired as my scheduler, her expertise in foreign policy led her to become my National Security Legislative Assistant. Soon after, she joined the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and Global Counterterrorism in which she served under Reps. Ted Deutch (FL-22) and David Cicilline (RI-01). In this time, she worked her way up from Professional Staff Member to the Subcommittee Staff Director all the while pursuing a master’s degree in defense and strategic studies at the U.S. Naval War College. As a Minnesota District Three native, Sophie understands how diplomacy and conflicts in far-away lands can impact our own communities, which has made her a wonderful advocate for our constituents in the foreign policy sphere.

Sophie is a powerhouse. She is not only a master knitter, but also an embodiment of what every congressional staffer strives to be. Confident in her abilities and fearless in her pursuit of peace through better policy, she brings a fire and intensity to her work that inspires everyone to be the best version of themselves. Sophie is just the type of person you would want with you in the case of a zombie apocalypse—she is smart, determined, loyal, and a joy to be around. For that, we’ve been extremely grateful to have her on our team.

The people of Minnesota’s Third Congressional District were lucky to have her dedication and leadership, and she will be dearly missed. However, I’m extraordinarily happy that she will continue to do this work and serve the Nation. I wish Sophie all the best in her future endeavors and thank her for six years of faithful service to this Nation.

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CELEBRATING DETECTIVE EDWIN  
HUGH

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**HON. NICK LaLOTA**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 10, 2024*

Mr. LaLOTA. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to celebrate Detective Edwin Hugh of the Suffolk County Police Department, who has been honored with the 7th Annual U.S. Attorney

General’s Award for Distinguished Service in Community Policing. This prestigious recognition highlights Detective Hugh’s outstanding contributions to community safety and his unwavering commitment to making Suffolk County a better place to live. His achievements exemplify the core values of law enforcement: integrity, dedication, and an unrelenting drive to protect and serve.

Detective Hugh has proven himself to be a leader in law enforcement, building trust with residents and strengthening public safety across Suffolk County. Whether pursuing justice for victims of crime or engaging directly with the community to foster partnerships, Detective Hugh consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty. Suffolk County is a safer place because of Detective Hugh’s hard work and steadfast dedication to better our communities.

His efforts to combat crime, reduce harm, and improve the lives of residents reflect his dedication not only to the badge he wears but also to the people he serves. He understands that effective policing is not just about enforcing laws—it is about creating an environment where families feel secure, businesses can thrive, and communities can flourish.

On behalf of the people of Suffolk County and the 1st Congressional District of New York, I extend my sincere congratulations to Detective Edwin Hugh and my heartfelt gratitude for his exceptional service. His work serves as a model for law enforcement professionals across the country, and his contributions to Suffolk County are a source of pride for us all.

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RECOGNIZING MONIQUEC CONNER  
AS OHIO’S 13TH CONGRESSIONAL  
DISTRICT CHAMPION OF THE  
WEEK

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**HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 10, 2024*

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Moniquec Conner as Ohio’s 13th Congressional District Champion of the Week.

Moniquec is a trailblazing civil rights activist. She was recently recognized with a Humanitarian Stone Award from the National Action Network, an organization dedicated to advancing civil rights issues.

This award reflects the years of hard work, dedication, and perseverance that she has invested in our community and fighting for the advancement of civil rights. Her commitment has remained steadfast—the hallmark of concerned and responsible citizenship.

Moniquec is currently the chair of the Ohio Women in the NAACP, and in 1999, she revitalized the Stark County branch of the NAACP, serving as its president in 2000.

In addition to her work for the NAACP, she is also the interim president of the National Action Network chapter that serves Stark and Summit counties.

As she has throughout her remarkable career, Moniquec continues to focus on issues such as police accountability, voting rights, corporate responsibility, pension diversity, youth leadership, crisis intake, victim assistance, and bridging the digital divide.

I would like to thank Moniquec for her dedication to fighting for change, and the amazing

work she does on behalf of the community. As a woman in a position of influence, she has certainly inspired the next generation of leaders to stand strong in their convictions and fight for justice.

Moniquec's unwavering championing of civil rights exemplifies the very spirit that makes Ohio's 13th Congressional District the "Birthplace of Champions." With this national recognition, she has certainly made our community proud.

RECOGNIZING BRYAN MACDONALD  
AND HIS DEDICATED SERVICE  
TO THE CITY OF OXNARD, CALIFORNIA

**HON. JULIA BROWNLEY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 10, 2024*

Ms. BROWNLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Bryan MacDonald, Mayor Pro Tem of the City of Oxnard, a notable public servant whose unwavering dedication has left an indelible mark on our community.

Bryan's service to Oxnard began in 2008 when he was first elected to the City Council, and his leadership and commitment to public service have been steadfast throughout his tenure. He was re-elected in 2012, 2016, and 2020, demonstrating his ongoing dedication to the city's growth and prosperity. In 2020, Bryan was appointed Mayor Pro Tem, a role that has allowed him to further influence the city's progress and address the needs of its residents. Prior to his time in local government, Bryan served for 30 years in the Oxnard Police Department, retiring as Assistant Chief of Police. His leadership in law enforcement has been a pillar of the city's public safety efforts and continues to serve as a lasting testament to his dedication and commitment to our community.

Beyond his roles in law enforcement and city governance, Bryan continues to share his wealth of knowledge as an Adjunct Professor of Criminal Justice at Ventura College. His influence extends well beyond the classroom, as he has taken on leadership positions with organizations that impact the entire community. Bryan has served as the Chairperson for the American Cancer Society Gold Coast Community Council, Board President of the Elite Theatre Company, and is an active member of the Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board for the County of Ventura Behavioral Health Department. He is also deeply involved with the Knights of Columbus, Council 750, and has contributed countless hours to making Oxnard a better place for all.

A long-time resident of Oxnard, Bryan and his wife Lorraine have called this community home since 1985. Together, they have been a constant presence in our city, investing in its people, its future, and its wellbeing.

As Bryan steps down from his role on the City Council, I join our community in expressing our appreciation for his immense contributions to public safety, education, and the overall commitment to building a better and stronger Oxnard. From his distinguished career in law enforcement to his leadership in governance and his community involvement, Bryan MacDonald has served our community well.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great esteem and respect that I recognize Bryan MacDonald for his invaluable service to the City of Oxnard. I thank him for his many years of leadership and commitment, and I wish him continued success in the next chapter of his life's journey.

HONORING RUSSELL SMOLDON

**HON. DEBBIE LESKO**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 10, 2024*

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize my friend, Russell D. Smoldon, CEO of B3 Strategies.

I first met Russell while serving in the Arizona State Legislature in 2009. At the time, Russell was the manager of government relations for Salt River Project (SRP), a major utility and water company in Arizona.

Russell now runs his own company and has over 35 years of public policy experience focused on energy, water, environmental, taxation, healthcare, and economic development issues.

Russell is a respected leader in Arizona and I believe just about everyone knows him and likes him. He serves on the board of the Arizona Tax Research Association (ATRA) and on the board of CrossRoads. Russell has also served in leadership positions with the Western Business Roundtable, the Greater Phoenix Urban League, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), the National Conference of State Legislators' Advisory Council on Energy, and the National Tax Partnership. He also served as a member of the Arizona Supreme Court's Child Support Guidelines and Domestic Relations Committees and the Arizona Highway Users' Association, and has assisted numerous non-profit organizations, including the Arizona Trails Association.

Russell is caring, fun-loving, funny, and knowledgeable. I have called on him for input on Arizona issues for many years.

I thank Russell for his years of support and for all of the times he has provided me with valuable information and advice. Please know that I appreciate him. May God continue to Bless him and his family for years to come.