

in his work, including performing as a successful comedian under the name of Jackie Walker.

When things took a turn for the worse, he finally turned to the VA for help and was seen by a therapist, who diagnosed him with post-traumatic stress disorder and helped him receive treatment and VA benefits.

With a new lease on life, Jack began helping other veterans experiencing PTSD by encouraging them to seek support to live happy, productive lives.

Gutman's valiant service to both his country and his life of service to his fellow veterans serves as an inspiration for us all. For this reason, I ask my colleagues to join me celebrating the life and legacy of Jack Gutman, a true American hero.

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#### HONORING TONY FLETCHER

### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Tony Fletcher, a dedicated advocate in our Napa community. For thirty-five years, Mr. Fletcher has demonstrated unwavering commitment to enriching the lives of the blind and visually impaired (BVI) through his work with the Enchanted Hills Camp for the Blind.

Born and raised in Napa, Mr. Fletcher dedicated his career to serving our community and ensuring that visually impaired individuals have access to resources. Mr. Fletcher's journey with Enchanted Hills Camp began in 1989, marking the start of a lifelong career with LightHouse for the Blind. Later, in 1995 he earned a Master of Arts in Special Education with an emphasis on Orientation and Mobility from San Francisco State University. Mr. Fletcher is retiring after thirty-five years of serving Lighthouse for the Blind which oversees Enchanted Hills Camp concluding his career as the Senior Director of Services.

Under Mr. Fletcher's leadership, Enchanted Hills Camp has flourished as a safe, nurturing, and empowering environment where blind campers of all ages could explore, learn, and experience the joys of a traditional summer camp. Mr. Fletcher's vision and determination extended beyond the campgrounds, as he built partnerships with the County of Napa. In 2017, when devastating wildfires destroyed much of Enchanted Hills Camp, Mr. Fletcher in partnership with County Supervisor Ryan Gregory and the LightHouse organization, helped rebuild the camp. Today, Enchanted Hills Camp continues to be a fully accessible and inclusive retreat where blind, deafblind, and low-vision campers continue to thrive.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. Fletcher for his remarkable service to the Napa community and the BVI population. Mr. Fletcher's work has had a profound impact on generations of students. His dedication has cultivated a legacy of resilience and compassion that will benefit our community for years to come. It is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

RECOGNIZING PA-1's HOMETOWN HERO: NEWTOWN BUSINESS COMMUNITY

### HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary group of individuals from Pennsylvania's First Congressional District—people who have 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 several outstanding representatives of the Newtown Business Community as some of our district's distinguished Hometown Heroes.

Matt Arlen  
Richard Fekete  
Kathleen McCafferty  
Gina Santoro

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. This group of remarkable individuals have embodied this spirit in ways that words can scarcely capture.

In 2021, Newtown business owners Gina Santoro, Richard Fekete, Matt Arlen, and Kathleen McCafferty approached Main Street Founder Keith Fenimore with an idea to bring our community together in support of local breast cancer patients. Their idea was to host a block party event that drives community members to come out and shop locally, with all proceeds going to Main Street, whose programs help local breast cancer patients and their families with food assistance, integrative services, counseling, therapy, out-of-pocket expenses, treatment transportation, comfort bags, treatment center support, and more. And so, the business owners along State Street changed their exterior lights with pink bulbs, hosted their first Light the Night Pink Block Party, and raised over \$8,000. Seeing the impact they were able to have, the Newtown Business Community collectively decided to continue and grow their efforts and hosted their second Block Party in 2022, which raised \$17,000. And in 2023, in an awe-inspiring show of unity and compassion, this incredible group of local entrepreneurs rallied together once more and raised over \$70,000—the most money ever raised and donated by a single event to the Main Street organization.

In times of uncertainty, it is the work of individuals like Gina, Richard, Matt, and Kathleen that reminds us of the power of the human spirit. Their service, given without expectation of recognition, stands as a testament to the belief that one individual's dedication can ripple through the lives of many, sparking change, fostering resilience, and inspiring hope. Today, we honor them not just for their remarkable deeds but for who they are—true heroes in every sense of the word.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to these individuals for their extraordinary

service. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this exceptional organization, 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.

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#### HONORING THE LIFE OF RACHEL ABRAHAM

### HON. JAMAAL BOWMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. BOWMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I want to remember the beautiful life of Rachel Abraham of Mamaroneck. Rachel passed recently at the young age of 25 from complications due to pulmonary hypertension, a condition she was diagnosed with at birth.

Our community in Mamaroneck and across New York's 16th district is devastated by Rachel's passing. I want to send love and strength to Rachel's parents, Deborah and Stephen, her siblings, Leah and Joshua, and her fiancé, Dylan. I know that they are proud of Rachel's incredible life and all that she was able to accomplish.

After graduating from Mamaroneck High School, Rachel attended American University and was in the process of getting her masters degree from George Washington University. She was also working at the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society as a Government Relations Manager, pursuing her goal of changing healthcare in the United States. Before her time at HIMSS, she worked for the National Council for Mental Wellbeing and ADvancing States and interned here in Congress.

We are all grateful for the contributions Rachel made to improving our healthcare across the country, work informed by her own experiences with the healthcare system throughout her life. Her commitment to public service and advocating for others is clear and we are all better for it.

My thoughts are with her family, friends, and loved ones in this difficult time. Rachel was a beautiful soul and an incredible part of our Mamaroneck community. It has been an honor to represent her and her family.

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#### CONGRATULATING DR. MICHAEL C. BURGESS ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AFTER 22 YEARS OF SERVICE

### HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate my friend and colleague, Chair of the Rules Committee, Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, on his retirement from the House of Representatives after a 22-year career representing the folks of Texas' 26th congressional district.

With his background as an OB-GYN doctor and the most senior medical doctor in the

House, Dr. BURGESS has been an important voice on every important healthcare debate during his two decades of service in the House. I've had the pleasure of working closely with Dr. BURGESS on the Energy and Commerce Committee for a long time, and whenever a bill related to healthcare was being debated or discussed, I knew I could count on Dr. BURGESS to provide clarity and insight from an experienced physician's perspective. Dr. BURGESS and I share a passion for our military servicemembers and for many Congresses have introduced the MISSION Zero initiative together to improve trauma care between the military and civilians. Seeing this bill signed into law was a major achievement together and I intend to ensure this program continues in his legacy. He has accomplished some truly amazing things during his time here including lowering drug costs, reigning in government waste, cutting taxes, and expanding healthcare options for folks around the country. Since being nominated as Chairman of the Rules Committee, Dr. BURGESS has worked tirelessly to ensure good legislation makes it to the floor and has been instrumental in our accomplishments in the 118th Congress.

I would like to thank Dr. BURGESS for his unwavering commitment to conservative principles and his sound leadership. On a personal note, I appreciate his friendship and counsel over the years. While his colleagues and the people in his district are sure to miss Dr. BURGESS in Congress, I know he is looking forward to spending more time with his family back home in his beloved Texas.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating my friend Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS on his retirement from the House of Representatives after 22 years of exemplary service to the people of Texas' 26th congressional district.

RECOGNIZING MAJOR MARIO FLORES, U.S. ARMY

**HON. BRETT GUTHRIE**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Major Mario Flores, U.S. Army, for his outstanding work on behalf of the Department of Defense. Major Flores served as a Department of Defense legislative fellow in the U.S. Senate, and later as a congressional liaison for the Army Reserve. Mario commissioned in the United States Army in 2011 through the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program at DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois where he received a B.S. in Business and later an M.S. in Legislative Affairs from George Washington University.

Through various assignments with 3rd Special Forces Group, the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Targeting Directorate, and Special Operations Command, Mario has made direct contributions to the U.S. National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy. Mario specializes in strategic and tactical targeting operations and is a graduate of the Joint Targeting School, the Joint Special Operations University's Special Operations Intelligence Course, and the Special Forces Combat Course—Support, and the Basic Airborne Course.

Mario is also a committed advocate for our Nation's veterans. In 2020, Mario was ap-

pointed by then-Virginia Governor Northam to serve a four-year appointment on the Virginia State Board on Veterans Services. In this role, he is responsible for advising the Virginia Department of Veterans Services on relevant policies in support of Virginia's veterans.

In addition to his military service, Mario's civilian background includes extensive government and private sector experience including being a Public Policy Congressional Fellow for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Fellowship Program, having various roles at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and joining General Dynamics Information Technology. Following his completion of his next level of military education in early 2025, he will be returning to the civilian workforce while also continuing his service in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Mario has been instrumental as an Army Reserve congressional liaison, especially working with my office to support Fort Knox. I thank Mario for his dedicated service, for his professionalism, and for his passionate service to our country and to our community. I also want to thank his wife, Jazmine, and I wish them both the best in their future endeavors.

HONORING U.S. ARMY CORPORAL WARREN J. WINNE, SR.

**HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of United States Army Corporal Warren J. Winne, Sr.

Warren was born on February 17, 1931, in Albany, New York, to Lyman and Gladys Winne. He grew up alongside his siblings: Franklin, Eugene, Eileen, and Dorothy. Warren started his education in Rensselaer, New York, and later enrolled at East Greenbush High School before enlisting in the United States Army on May 3, 1948.

Warren served on active duty with the Army from 1948 to 1952 and earned the rank of Corporal during his military career. Corporal Winne was a member of the 7th Infantry Division during the Korean War until his Honorable Discharge in 1952. Upon returning to civilian life, he married his wife Mary on September 21, 1952, at St. John's Church in Rensselaer and began a career as a pipe insulator for the Johns Manville Company.

Warren established deep roots within his community. He was a proud volunteer firefighter with the Clinton Heights Fire Department, a member of the Melvin Roads American Legion Post No. 1231, and the Umpire-in-Chief of the East Greenbush Girls Softball Organization. His commitment to the softball community was recognized with the dedication of the East Greenbush Girls Softball field in his honor. Warren was also an active member of the Asbestos Union No. 40, demonstrating his solidarity with his fellow workers. In his free time, Warren was a skilled hunter and avid fisherman. Above all, Warren cherished his time spent with his four children: Carol, Sandra, Colleen, and Warren Jr.

On behalf of New York's 21st Congressional District, it is an honor to recognize the extraordinary life of Corporal Warren J. Winne, Sr. and the enduring legacy of his character, self-

lessness, and dedication to his country and community.

RECOGNIZING UNITED STATES ARMY WORLD WAR II VETERAN GUIDO P. DiFRANCESCO'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding constituent from my district, Guido P. DiFrancesco. He is a current resident of the Lutheran Community of Telford, Pennsylvania. Born in Philadelphia on December 17, 1924, Guido is celebrating his 100th birthday today.

He grew up on Mechanic Street in the Germantown section of Philadelphia with his four brothers and five sisters. At age 8, he constructed his own shoeshine box and started his own shoeshine business to help provide food for his parents and siblings. Guido had an amazing singing voice as a child, and he cultivated his love of music when he could by performing at school functions, weddings, and local night clubs. He attended Germantown High School until the Depression required him to leave high school and seek employment to help support his family.

As a teenager, he held several jobs including the Philadelphia Steel Mill and the famous Victor Harmonica factory where he learned to construct and play the harmonica before he entered the United States Army in 1941. He sailed to England on the RMS Mauretania where he entertained the troops with his gift of singing. He landed in Weymouth, England and prepared for the invasion of Normandy.

On D-Day, with G-Company, he landed on Omaha Beach with the First Infantry Division (The Big Red One), 18th Infantry Regiment. He was a Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) Marksman and fought across France for 6 months in hedge row to hedge row battles until he finally reached Belgium. He became deathly ill and was hospitalized there and then transferred to a hospital in England. While recuperating in England, he entertained the patients with his singing. He eventually came back to America and continued his convalescence and his singing at the Convalescent Hospital in Camp Upton, New York until he was honorably discharged and returned home in the spring of 1943.

After he returned home, he married and lived on Boyer Street in Germantown and eventually moved to Horsham, Pennsylvania in 1952. He held several manufacturing positions including a plant manager position at Huntingdon Industries for 30 years and Mac Electric in Glenside for 10 years. He was also self-employed as a home-improvement specialist until he officially retired at age 85. Guido was an involved member of the Warrington Lions for many years and worked tirelessly at their events.

Guido finally received his high school diploma at age 93. His work ethic and ingenuity are exemplary. He was devoted to his first wife, Rose, who died in 1976 and his second wife, Kitty, who died in 2019. He is a proud parent, grandparent, and great-grandparent of a blended family including a daughter and