

central focus of his first term, it was the House Budget Committee, with John as Chair, that helped shepherd the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act through Congress in 2010. John knew his role in pushing the bill forward would likely cost him his seat in Congress—and it did—but it was a price he was willing to pay for the good of the country.

John is survived by his childhood sweetheart and wife of 56 years, Jane Stacy Spratt; three daughters, Susan, Sarah, and Catherine; and five grandchildren. When he retired from Congress, John returned to his home community of York and served as a Visiting Distinguished Professor of Public Policy at Winthrop University and on the board of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

Mr. Speaker, serving in this Body with John Spratt was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. He was a friend and confidant, a colleague and counselor, a mentor and partner. His love of country and respect for humanity were always on display. He was an inconspicuous genius and the most ordinary, extraordinary person I have ever known. I will always remember his wise counsel, quick wit, and endless kindness. John represented the best of America, and America is better off because of him. We will miss John dearly, and may he rest in peace.

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RECOGNIZING JUDGE WILLIE EARL  
LOCKETTE

**HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 18, 2024*

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and pleasure to extend my personal congratulations and best wishes to an exceptional community leader and outstanding public servant, Judge Willie Earl Lockette, on the occasion of his retirement as the Chief Judge of the Superior Court of Dougherty County.

A native of Turner County, Georgia, Judge Lockette received his bachelor's degree in History and Political Science from Fort Valley State College (now University) where he began his lifelong journey as a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Following his time at Fort Valley State College, Judge Lockette completed his juris doctorate degree from the University of Illinois, College of Law at Champaign.

For almost three decades, Judge Lockette has been a distinguished jurist and public servant in Dougherty County. He has built quite an impressive career, which began with his position as a Staff Attorney with the Albany, Georgia Regional Office of Georgia Legal Services Programs, Inc. (GLSP), where he litigated federal and state cases on behalf of indigent Georgians. In 1991, he was appointed as an Associate Judge of the Magistrate Court of Dougherty County, and in 1993, he was appointed to Chief Judge. In 1996, Lockette declared his candidacy for Judge of the Superior Court of Dougherty County, and won a decisive victory over a well-established, well-financed opponent. Judge Lockette's win was historic. With his election he became the first African American to win a county-wide contested election in the Dougherty Judicial Circuit. Judge Lockette would go on to win six additional terms, be-

coming the Chief Judge of the Superior Court in 2009.

In addition to his legal background, Judge Lockette has served in several other leadership roles in the Albany-Dougherty County community. In 2001, he answered the call to gospel ministry and went on to become an ordained minister. For 12 years, he served as a Pastor's Assistant at the New Grove Missionary Baptist Church. Today, Judge Lockette is the Pastor of the Greater Pines Chapel Missionary Baptist Church where he continues to shepherd his congregation and serve the greater community. Additionally, for nearly 10 years, Judge Lockette served as an Adjunct Professor of Political Science, History and Public Administration at Albany State University.

In addition to his extensive career, Judge Lockette was the recipient of several awards and distinctions. He was the inaugural recipient of the coveted Dan Bradley Award for Public Service and has also been nominated for appointments to several judgeships, to include the Georgia Court of Appeals, the United States Magistrate Court, and the United States District Court.

Judge Lockette has accomplished so much throughout his life, but none of this would have been possible without the Grace of God and the love and support of his wife, Helen Hamilton Lockette and their four children, 12 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren.

Sir Winston Churchill often said: "You make your living by what you get; you make your life by what you give." Southwest Georgia is truly a better place because of Judge Willie Lockette's service to his community as an attorney, judge, pastor, professor, and neighbor. His dedication and his expertise as a public servant are unparalleled, but his heart for helping others has made his life's work truly special.

On a personal note, Judge Lockette has been my friend for many years. He never told me what he thought I wanted to hear; he told me what he thought I needed to hear. I will forever cherish his sage counsel and advice which has been invaluable to me as I have served in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the more than 765,000 people of Georgia's Second Congressional District, in extending our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to Judge Willie Earl Lockette upon the occasion of his retirement from an outstanding career of public service.

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TRIBUTE TO KEVIN JEFFRIES

**HON. KEN CALVERT**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 18, 2024*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to and congratulate Riverside County Supervisor Kevin Jeffries for his 12 years of dedicated service to the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. Kevin will be stepping down from the Board of Supervisors this month, marking the end of a decades-long career in public service.

Kevin has been a resident of Riverside County since 1971 and was a successful small business owner. His first foray in public service came in 1977 as a Volunteer Fire

Captain for the Riverside County Fire Department. Just a few years later, in 1980, Kevin was elected to serve on the Board of Directors of a Local Park & Recreation District. Eager to improve local water infrastructure and protect residents from water and sewer rate increases, Kevin successfully ran for a seat on the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District Board of Directors in 1990, and on the Western Municipal Water District Board of Directors in 1998.

In 2006, Kevin was chosen by voters to represent Riverside County in the California State Assembly. In Sacramento, Kevin took on the challenging task of fighting to stop the regulatory and tax onslaught on California's small businesses. In 2012, Kevin was elected to the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. As Supervisor, Kevin has made an effort to balance Riverside County's growth with investments in necessary infrastructure and public safety. Thanks to his advocacy, Riverside County continues to be a source of affordable housing, safe family-friendly communities, and economic opportunity, and is well-positioned for years to come.

On a personal note, I count Kevin as a close friend. I have appreciated his advice, humor, and support over the years and look forward to many more. I thank Kevin for his friendship, leadership, and his lasting impact in creating a better future for Riverside County.

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HONORING THE SERVICE OF  
OWATONNA MAYOR TOM KUNTZ

**HON. BRAD FINSTAD**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 18, 2024*

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Tom Kuntz, a friend and fellow southern Minnesotan who has served the Owatonna community for the past twenty years.

In 2004, Tom was elected Mayor of Owatonna, where he found his true calling in public service. Throughout his five-term tenure, Owatonna experienced remarkable growth, with a revitalization of the city's downtown area, the relocation of Owatonna Hospital, an expanding industrial park, completion of the four-lane U.S. Highway 14 project between Owatonna and Dodge Center, and the construction of a new, state-of-the-art high school—just to name a few.

Tom has been a fixture in Owatonna for decades, fiercely advocating for the city's economic growth and development, bringing his vision to the role of mayor. A good leader knows it's not about the position, it's about listening to people. Tom listens more than he speaks, and in his twenty years as mayor, has undoubtedly made a difference in the lives of many Owatonnsans, displaying the kind of leadership we should show to our kids and grandkids. He is a true embodiment of who we are in southern Minnesota.

Tom not only leaves behind enormous shoes to fill, but also a legacy that Owatonna will remember for generations.

I congratulate Tom on his well-deserved retirement, and wishing him and his wife, Shelby, the best in this next chapter.

CONGRATULATING THE MACON COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM ON WINNING STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

**HON. JOHN W. ROSE**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 18, 2024*

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Macon County High School football team for securing their first state championship.

The Tigers advance to the playoffs often. They've done so 20 times in the last 55 years. But this year they captured the big Class 4A BlueCross Bowl Title after defeating Melrose 45 to 15.

Twin brothers, Zach and Gabe Borders are credited as standouts. Gabe ran for 117 yards and completed his team's only pass for a touchdown. His brother, Zach, earned MVP after his 250-yard performance, which included four rushing scores in the second half. The Tigers were fortunate to have both brothers on the field, especially considering Zach has undergone surgery and pins after multiple breaks to his collarbone.

I would now like to recognize everyone who carried the team to victory. Players included: Anthony Johnson, Cooper Carlisle, Isaac McClard, Baylon Hesson, Zach Borders, Kelby Wheeler, Bradyn Hasse, Gabe Borders, Kelen Hire, Kilian Jetton, Ty Young, Michael Bentley, Andrew Comer, Corey Underwood, Bradley Crawford, Mathew Wheeley, Hunter Jones, Taylen Swaffer, Luke Gammon, Braylon Flowers, Brennan Flowers, Jayden Cook, Michael Pelico, Braxton Boles, Tanner Gilmore, Tre McClain, Dakota Ridgeway, Hadyn Hasse, Trey Gann, Roberto Perez, Logan Tirjan, Mathew Brawner, Koen Kindle, Lamoney Mosley, Cooper East, Kade McKinney, Eli Gammon, Kellan Craft, Corbin Stephens, Dakota Hackert, Nicholas Goodrich, Owen Pitts, Dawson Whittemore, Brody Frye, Ethan Parker, Levi Edgmon, Jaxon Frye, Bo Warner, Hunter Griggs, Cooper Dunn, Emmerson Hubbard, Gavin Johnson, Ethan West, Bryson Wauford, Javier Rodriguez, Courtland Shrum, Zvi Rotstein, Colton Clark, James Clark, Aedan Hopson, Brock Buckalew, Wyatt Walrond, Ruben Valdez, Dayton Demmink-Harwood, Christian Sanchez, Dylan Stone, Jeremiah Vaughn Gilpin, Tyler Mossbarger, Gael Amaral Sanchez, Dillon Crutchfield, and Camren Miller.

I'd also like to recognize Head Coach Kyle Shoulders and assistant coaches: Isaac Belton, Lionel Borders, Sean Corbitt, Chris Escamilla, Ethan Jenkins, Ty Lowhorn, Brandon Nix, Jack Painter, Brandon Robertson, Drew Scott, Eli Stephenson, Chase Whittemore, and Spencer Young.

I congratulate all the players, the coaches, and their families. And congratulations to all who prayed over the health of the senior class.

HONORING MRS. CLEOPATRIA PRYOR

**HON. ANDRÉ CARSON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 18, 2024*

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor an extraordinary woman, Mrs. Cleopatria Pryor, in celebration of her 100th birthday.

Mrs. Pryor, known as Opatria to her friends, has been an unwavering advocate for justice, equality, and civil rights, dedicating herself to ensuring a brighter future for generations of African Americans in her community. As we commemorate a century of life, we recognize her invaluable contributions to the civil rights movement and her lifelong commitment to service.

Born on December 29, 1924, in Lafayette County, Mississippi, Mrs. Pryor grew up witnessing firsthand the harsh realities of systemic racism, which sparked her determination to fight for change. As a young mother of 11, she acted to secure bus service for Black children in Marshall County, strengthening equal access to education. Her advocacy didn't stop there. In 1966, she played a pivotal role in integrating Holly High School, where her children became two of the first Black students to attend.

Mrs. Pryor also led efforts to increase voter registration in Marshall County, traveling door-to-door to ensure African Americans could exercise their right to vote. Her work was instrumental in the elections of Osborne Bell and Lawrence Autry who served as the first African American sheriff and school superintendent in the county.

Mrs. Pryor was a lifelong homemaker known for her gardening and cooking just as well as for instilling in her children the values of justice and service she held dear. Her legacy of courage, resilience, and advocacy continues to inspire generations, especially through her encouragement for others to engage in their communities and exercise their rights.

Today, we celebrate Mrs. Opatria Pryor not only for the profound impact she has made in her community but also for the countless lives she has touched with her compassion, leadership, and dedication to justice. She is a true pioneer, and her contributions will continue to inspire generations to come.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the life and legacy of Mrs. Opatria Pryor as she celebrates her 100th birthday. We are grateful for her tireless commitment to making the world a better place for all.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF HENRY C. GARRETT, JR

**HON. MICHAEL CLOUD**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 18, 2024*

Mr. CLOUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Henry C. Garrett, Jr., a devoted Chief of Police, Mayor, husband, and father who passed away on December 8, 2024, at the age of 84.

Mayor Garrett dedicated over 30 years to the Corpus Christi Police Department, rising

from patrolman in 1963 to Chief of Police in 1989, earning the title "*The People's Chief.*" After retiring in 1996, he continued serving his community as a three-term City Council Member and later as Mayor for two terms, from 2005 to 2009.

Above all, Mayor Garrett was a loving husband, father, and leader whose life exemplified service and a deep commitment to his community. His contributions have left a lasting impact on Corpus Christi, Texas.

Mr. Speaker, so many of America's public servants today—especially our police officers—have a tremendous responsibility of serving our constituents and to do so with grace and integrity. All who knew Henry Garrett would tell you: he exemplified what it meant to be a public servant. His was a life well lived.

I extend my heartfelt condolences to Mayor Garrett's family and all who were blessed to know him. May God bless and comfort them during this time.

JAMUL INDIAN VILLAGE LAND TRANSFER ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. DARRELL ISSA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 17, 2024*

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, S. 3857, the *Jamul Indian Village Land Transfer Act* is a technical correction to my bill, H.R. 6443, which passed out of the House by voice in April of 2024.

The bill is a traditional fee-to-trust agreement that will allow tribal members to move back onto their ancestral lands—so they can raise their families, carry forward their culture, and add to their history.

This is the right thing to do, the smart thing to do, and it empowers not government, but individuals to take new charge and best care of their lives.

I ask for passage of this bill, and I thank Chairman WESTERMAN, Ranker GRIJALVA, and Senator PADILLA for their support.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JOHN B. LARSON**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 18, 2024*

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 502, on H.R. 7213.

CONGRATULATING THE BLAIR OAKS FALCONS, THE MISSOURI CLASS 3 FOOTBALL STATE CHAMPIONS

**HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 18, 2024*

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, today, I recognize the Blair Oaks Falcons football team's remarkable achievement of clinching the Class 3 championship. They ended their