

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING APOSTLE JOHN
ECKHARDT

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON
OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr Speaker, I rise today to recognize Apostle John Eckhardt, who is being recognized and honored for his significant impact to the Body of Christ at the 2024 State of the Church Summit, in Miami, Florida.

Whereas, John Eckhardt's journey began on the South Side of Chicago on November 19, 1957, where he was born into a legacy of achievement, with his father being a professional baseball player in the Negro League, and his mother a first-generation descendant of Italian immigrants; and

Whereas, Apostle Eckhardt's pursuit of knowledge led him through the Catholic school system, earning a scholarship to Loyola Academy for high school and Northwestern University for college, where he studied Pre-Med, showcasing his dedication to academic excellence; and

Whereas, Apostle Eckhardt, through divine intervention, experienced salvation in 1978 during his junior year in college, leading him on the path to ministry, where he met his wife, Wanda Eckhardt, at a local church, later marrying her in 1979, and together they have raised a family of five children and two grandchildren; and

Whereas, Apostle Eckhardt, with unwavering dedication, assumed the role of Pastor in 1988 and, over the years, has become a beacon of inspiration for countless individuals, imparting his apostolic mandate and prophetic insight; and

Whereas, Apostle Eckhardt is the visionary CEO and founder of Impact University and John Eckhardt Global, institutions that stand as pillars of knowledge and empowerment in the heart of Chicago. He has dedicated his life to serving as an international speaker, missionary, and overseer of Crusaders Church in Chicago, Illinois; and

Whereas, Apostle Eckhardt has demonstrated a commitment to fostering spiritual growth and understanding, reaching across continents with a weekly broadcast on Clubhouse and Facebook, titled "The Decrees for Breakthrough and The Porch". Apostle Eckhardt's influence extends far beyond national borders, having ministered in more than 90 nations and six continents, leaving an indelible mark on the global body of Christ, and

Whereas, Apostle Eckhardt is a prolific author, having penned over fifty books, including renowned titles such as "Prayers That Rout Demons," "Prayers That Break Curses," "Prophet Arise," "God Still Speaks," and his latest release, "You Shall Recover All"; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved that I, Frederica S. Wilson, a member of the United States House of Representatives, representing the 24th Congressional District of Florida, rec-

ognize Apostle John Eckhardt for his outstanding contributions to the global community, his unwavering commitment to spiritual enlightenment, and his transformative impact on the lives of countless individuals.

HONORING THE CASS CITY
CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dennis (Joe) Merchant, a pillar of the Cass City community, for being named Cass City's Citizen of the Year. Joe's lifetime of selfless service, both in uniform and within our community, exemplifies the highest ideals of citizenship and community engagement.

Joe, a Cass City High School graduate of the class of 1968, answered the call of duty by volunteering for the U.S. Army, serving with distinction in the 1st Cavalry Division during his time in Vietnam. Upon his return, Joe continued to serve our community through his family's business until its closure. His commitment to service did not wane with the end of his military career or family business, instead, it deepened as he became an integral part of the Cass City VFW Post 3644.

As Post Commander, Joe's leadership transformed the VFW hall into a vibrant community center, reflecting his vision for a space where veterans and community members alike could come together. His efforts led to significant improvements in the facility, making it a hub of activity and support for veterans and their families.

Joe's dedication to honoring veterans extended beyond the walls of the VFW hall. His determination to give Vietnam Veterans the welcome home they deserved was realized to bringing Sky Soldiers and their UH1H Huey to Cass City for the 4th of July Freedom Festival. This event, which Joe tirelessly worked to organize, provided a poignant moment of recognition and healing for many veterans, as well as an educational and memorable experience for our community.

Mr. Speaker, it is individuals like Dennis (Joe) Merchant who forge the strong backbone of communities across our nation. His lifetime of service, both in the armed forces and within Cass City, sets a sterling example of dedication, resilience, and community spirit. It is with immense honor that we recognize Joe Merchant as Cass City's Citizen of the Year, a title he richly deserves for his indelible contributions to our community and nation.

Today, we celebrate Joe's achievements and service, we are reminded of the profound impact one individual can have on the lives of many. Let us draw inspiration from his example, striving to serve our communities and country with the same zeal and selflessness that Joe Merchant has shown throughout his remarkable life.

HONORING JIM HOST

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an exceptional man, Mr. Jim Host, of Lexington, Kentucky. Mr. Host will receive the 2024 Tom Jernstedt Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2024 Men's Final Four in Phoenix, Arizona. This award is presented to honor individuals who have made a meaningful impact on college basketball.

Mr. Host grew up in Ashland, Kentucky. He earned one of the first two baseball scholarships given by the University of Kentucky in 1955. He graduated from the University of Kentucky with a degree in radio arts and played one year of pro baseball as a pitcher for the Chicago White Sox. A shoulder injury ended his baseball career. He was the youngest person to serve in Governor Louie Nunn's cabinet, as Commissioner of Public Information and Commissioner of Parks. He ran for Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky in 1971. Mr. Host served as Governor Ernie Fletcher's Secretary of Commerce from 2003–2005. His service to Kentucky continued as the first Executive Director of Rupp Arena, founding chairman of the Kentucky Horse Park, and chairman of the Louisville Arena Authority.

Mr. Host was founder and CEO of Host Communications. His nationally known sports marketing company brought business knowledge and fresh ideas to college sports marketing. He began working with the NCAA in the mid-1970's and transformed the promotion of college basketball and the post-season tournament. Before his involvement, there was no "Final Four" label and not even an official program for the tournament. With his entrepreneurial and innovative skills, he introduced corporate sponsorships, the national radio network, and many other successful ideas that made college basketball what we enjoy today.

Mr. Host has earned many well-deserved accolades. He is a member of the UK Alumni Association Hall of Distinguished Alumni, the UK Athletics Hall of Fame, the National College Basketball Hall of Fame, and the National Tourism Hall of Fame. He was named Kentucky's Entrepreneur of the Year in 1998. From the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, he received the Chairman's Cup Award, the John Bunn Lifetime Achievement Award, and is a lifetime trustee.

For his outstanding service to the Commonwealth of Kentucky and for his latest award, the 2024 Tom Jernstedt Lifetime Achievement Award, it is my honor to call him my friend and to recognize his accomplishments before the United States House of Representatives.

• 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.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF
MASTER SERGEANT STEVEN D.
PARKER

HON. ANDREW OGLES

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize Master Sergeant Steven D. Parker, who is retiring from the 218th Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group (ISRG) of the Tennessee Air National Guard.

Master Sergeant Steven D. Parker began his military career over forty years ago on March 12, 1984. He honorably served the Tennessee Air National Guard as a C-130 Aircraft Mechanic for 28 years and an Administrative Craftsman for 12 years. His deployments include time in Tabuk, Minhad, and at Bagram Air Base to support Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. He later served in Baghdad supporting Operation Inherent Resolve as an Administration Craftsman.

Master Sergeant Parker's exemplary service and dedication to his country has twice earned him the 218 ISRG Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Quarterly Award. He also serves as the Sergeant at Arms at American Legion Post 141 in Tennessee, where he champions patriotism and community engagement, something which he commits to himself by volunteering in his community.

I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking Master Sergeant Parker for his service to his country and in wishing him good luck as he retires.

RECOGNIZING FRANK RENDA

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a great American success story that has taken place in the 24th Congressional District that I represent in North Texas. As a member of the House Small Business Committee who represents countless job creators with growing businesses, I appreciate the role of our small business owners in creating opportunity and prosperity for North Texans. I rise to recognize one such company, Southland Holdings in Grapevine, Texas, which recently realized the American dream, starting as a family business and recently reaching the milestone of becoming publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange. Oscar and Rudy Renda, Sr., and their three other brothers, along with their parents, immigrated to the United States from Italy in 1956. Sponsored by their uncle, Ernie Renda, a Pearl Harbor survivor and construction veteran, Ernie tirelessly worked to bring his family to America. The Renda brothers grew up influenced by their Uncle Ernie's strong work ethic and a profound passion for construction. Oscar embarked on his career as a high school coach and history teacher but always harbored a deep passion for construction instilled by Uncle Ernie. In 1974, he realized his dream by founding Oscar Renda Contracting (ORC). A

year later, his brother Rudy joined him, and they began building small-diameter water and wastewater pipelines across the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolis, employing former high school students as their initial crew, many of whom remain with the company today.

Over the next few years, ORC refined its expertise in constructing large-diameter water and wastewater conveyance pipelines and treatment plants. Much of the company's early experience centered around building projects for the City of Dallas. From this local experience, the company gradually expanded its operations with larger and more complex projects across Texas and neighboring states. Through these years, the next generation led by Frank and Rudy Renda gained invaluable experience working alongside skilled crew members from an early age. During their college years at Texas Tech University, Frank and Rudy crossed paths with Tim Winn, which further led to a discovery of shared goals, values, and aspirations that have been the foundation of Southland's success.

Frank, Rudy, and Tim assumed control of the company in 1999, and the following year, entered a joint venture with Southland Contracting, established by Charlie Griffith in 1981. Charlie's unfortunate and premature death led Frank, Tim, Rudy, and Clay, Charlie's son, to assume leadership of the company, and in 2002, Oscar Renda Contracting acquired Southland Contracting. Their shared vision, unwavering commitment, and steadfast principles motivated them to establish Southland Holdings in 2006. Frank Renda assumed the role of CEO, while Rudy Renda and Tim Winn became co COO's. This strategic move laid the groundwork for the company's remarkable growth in the following decade. In the coming years, Southland Holdings welcomed Mole Constructors, Johnson Brothers Corporation, and American Bridge Company into the Southland Holdings family. This family of companies has accomplished remarkable feats in various sectors, including connecting the United States through transportation projects, establishing water pipelines and treatment facilities to transport water across vast regions, tunneling through challenging geological conditions, and contributing to the construction of some of the nation's most iconic structural landmarks.

Once again, Frank, Rudy, and Tim achieved an ambitious goal, with Southland becoming publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol SLND. On March 2, 2023, the three of them had the honor of ringing the bell at the NYSE, just a few miles away from where Frank and Rudy's ancestors immigrated into the country at Ellis Island. Frank remarked, "Amidst the ringing of the bell and the applause, I couldn't help but feel a profound sense of gratitude, not only for myself and my partners, but also for our dedicated employees and our family that paved the way to this momentous occasion."

Today, Southland boasts nearly 3,000 employees across North America and the Bahamas. They have performed work in seven countries and thirty-eight states, generating approximately \$1.2 billion in annual revenue. Frank expressed gratitude for the journey, emphasizing that it was only possible through hard work, dedication, sacrifice, and trust. The Southland family is building a construction legacy, carrying forward the values of the generations that came before them, and that is just the beginning of the Southland story.

HONORING NAM PHAM

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dedicated work and leadership of Mr. Nam Pham in service of improving the lives of immigrant families in our community in Santa Clara County. Mr. Pham passed away in March 2024.

Mr. Nam Pham was born in 1955 in Saigon, Vietnam. In 1983, he arrived in Malaysia as a political refugee after escaping Vietnam by boat. He eventually arrived in Rhode Island in 1984 and settled in California the following year. He has been a resident of Santa Clara County for four decades.

During his 40 years in our community, Mr. Pham produced hundreds of magazines, documentaries, and audio records to preserve Vietnamese history and culture in the United States in service of future.

Since 2001, Mr. Pham served as Director of the Immigrant Resettlement & Cultural Center, Inc. (IRCC) and had extensive experience in our community of working with the Vietnamese immigrant population. He oversaw IRCC operations, including personnel, finance, as well as funded volunteer programs. IRCC was the very first community-based organization in Santa Clara County offering education and social services to the Vietnamese community.

Since 2015, Mr. Pham helped host the "Thank You, America" annual event where Vietnamese Americans express gratitude and appreciation to the United States for rescuing them at sea and providing them a new home. Through IRCC and Dan Sinh Media, which he created, and which broadcasted programs nationwide through The Overseas Vietnam Radio Network, Mr. Pham worked to develop a health information network to help meet the health needs of Vietnamese Americans in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Mr. Nam Pham's commitment to bettering the lives of immigrants in our diverse, thriving community. His legacy in our community lives on through his projects. We have been lucky to have him, and he will be missed.

HONORING THE CAREER OF CHIEF
ANTHONY "TONY" SACCONÉ

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 12, 2024

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor a long time, career first responder from Eastern Connecticut, Chief Anthony "Tony" Saccone. Chief Saccone has diligently served and protected his hometown, Ledyard Connecticut, specifically Ledyard's village of Gales Ferry. On Saturday April 13, 2024, Tony will be honored at a retirement celebration by his family, department colleagues and friends, recognizing his talented, faithful adherence to duty.

Chief Saccone was born and raised in Greenbush N.Y. where he attended and graduated Watervliet High School. He was brought up in a large, loving family by his father who