

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### RECOGNIZING TARA BALLANTYNE

#### HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions made to our community by one of my constituents, Tara Ballantyne, who serves as the President of Lion's Club in Inverness. Tara also volunteers in her local church, Serves as Secretary of the Gulf Coast Manatees Homeschool Group Inc, and with the Business Women's Alliance, which is a part of the Citrus County Chamber. Needless to say, she is heavily involved in her community and has a big heart with a mission to serve. Tara strives for success and puts her heart into all that she does. She never takes her job lightly and is a wonderful role model. As President of the Lions Club, she makes sure the organization remains relevant and active. She is involved in making decisions and getting out in the community to share the mission of the organization. She spearheads bi-annual clean-ups. Tara also helped secure an eye vision screening grant. With this grant, the organization goes to local schools and community events to provide free vision screenings. It also helps multiple non-profit organizations, provides donations, games and vision screenings and support throughout the year. She also orchestrates toy drives and donations for families at Christmas time. When our community was hit hard by a recent hurricane, Tara organized a Disaster Relief Donation Drive.

It is clear that Ms. Ballantyne has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for her service.

### RECOGNIZING VALERIE ANDERSON

#### HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions of one of my constituents, Valerie Anderson, who has served as an active member of Premier Community HealthCare's Patient and Community Advisory Council since July 2021 and on the Board of Directors since January 2022. She brings a wealth of experience to the organization with her background as the former Director of Housing and Special Programs at the Pasco County Housing Authority as well as more than two decades working with the American Cancer Society. She is often the first person to step up to take a leadership role for Premier programs and events. For the past two years, Valerie has served as the Event Chair of Premier's Annual Community Impact Breakfast raising nearly \$100,000 each year to support the organization's mission to expand accessible healthcare for all.

Valerie is also a Premier patient and has family members and loved ones who have benefited from Premier's medical, dental and behavioral health services. She is a champion for advocating for the need for quality, affordable healthcare and understands the impact it makes on the overall health of our community. In addition to her volunteer work, she also financially supports the Federally-Qualified Community Health Center's events. Valerie is now the Chair of Premier's Community Engagement and Stewardship Board Committee. Under her leadership, Premier is going to continue to expand its reach to build additional resources. Valerie humbles herself and always finds time to volunteer for other local non-profit organizations who share similar visions and missions including: the African American Club, Dress for Success, and Africa's Children's Heart. She is always available to help those in need.

It is clear that Ms. Anderson has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for her service.

### OBSERVING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1994 GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TUTSI IN RWANDA

#### HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to mark the 30th anniversary of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. This devastating event, recognized worldwide, saw the brutal massacre of over 1,000,000 Tutsi in a hundred days by the Hutu-led Government and their Hutu neighbors. It was a chillingly systematic act of genocide.

Tragically, even Hutu who opposed the genocidal plan were not spared during this dark period. The scale of this atrocity stands as a severe violation of human rights and the principles of justice, inflicting immeasurable pain and suffering.

The genocide against the Tutsi serves as a somber reminder of the collective responsibility we share, both in the United States and globally, to protect the vulnerable, champion human rights, and prevent such horrors from recurring.

Every April 7th, the world has come together to commemorate this genocide, honoring the memory of the men, women, and children who lost their lives and standing in solidarity with the survivors.

This annual commemoration is not merely an act of remembrance. It serves to foster understanding among diverse communities and strengthens our collective commitment to human rights, safeguarding against persecution and violence, upholding individual liberties, and advocating for a free and inclusive society for all.

Therefore, let us:

Observe the 30th anniversary of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, remembering both the victims and survivors of this tragedy.

Acknowledge and commend the ongoing efforts of the people and Government of Rwanda in promoting peace, unity, reconciliation, and development, pledging our continued support for these endeavors.

Reaffirm our unwavering commitment to Rwanda's mission of preventing genocide and other mass atrocities, and to advancing human rights and democratic values across the globe.

### RECOGNIZING BRIAN AND STEPHANIE BRIJBAG

#### HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions made to our community by my constituents, Brian and Stephanie Brijbag. In honor of their daughter who has autism, the couple created the Brijbag Family Foundation which has started a project called Rachel's Room. These rooms were designed with the input of a certified behavioral analyst who helps create safe and supportive learning environments for children with special needs. It is a pro-active approach to helping all kids maximize their potential while also enabling teachers to engage learners in a more functional space. The feedback and positive results stemming from this project have been phenomenal. Schools and other organizations have requesting access to a replicated version of Rachel's Room. Brian and Stephanie have also purchased \$1.6 million worth of medical debt to help improve the lives of families in Pasco, Citrus, and Hernando who were struggling with the burden of medical debt. The Brijbag family is incredibly generous with their time, talents and treasure.

It is clear that Mr. and Mrs. Brijbag has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for their service.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. JENNIFER WEXTON

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Ms. WEXTON. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I was not able to be present to vote on April 15, 2024. Had I been present, I would have voted: YES on Roll Call No. 120; YES on Roll Call No. 121; YES on Roll Call No. 122; and NO on Roll Call No. 123.

• 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.

COMMEMORATING LEADERSHIP  
SOUTH BEND-MISHAWAKA'S 50TH  
ANNIVERSARY

**HON. RUDY YAKYM III**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize and congratulate everyone at Leadership South Bend-Mishawaka on their upcoming 50th anniversary celebration in May, and in particular, the members of Class 50 on their commencement ceremonies.

As a proud member of Leadership SBM's Signature Leadership Class 43 back in 2017, I know firsthand what an invaluable resource and great organization Leadership SBM really is. Leadership SBM plays a vital role in getting young people better connected within our community and with their peers across a wide spectrum of professions and fields. In fact, I'm still proud to count many of my classmates from Class 43 as dear friends to this day.

Leadership SBM is instrumental in forming tomorrow's local leaders; leaders who will create the kinds of opportunities we all will benefit from. Additionally, the opportunities Leadership SBM provides for continued learning, social connection, and community service projects is a big part of what makes our region in northern Indiana so special. For all these reasons and more, I am proud to be counted as one of Leadership SBM's many alumni going back a half-century.

Congratulations to Leadership SBM on this impressive milestone and on 50 years of excellence. I hope everyone enjoys the very well-deserved 50th anniversary celebration in May, and I look forward to congratulating Leadership SBM on many more anniversaries in the years ahead.

RECOGNIZING ERIN CARTER-  
HARVEY

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions made in our community by one of my constituents, Erin Carter-Harvey, for her efforts with Steele Tryin', a non-profit that organizes events and support for those in the community who are struggling. Most recently, she organized a "drive-by honking" where droves of cars paraded past the house of a local child who was dying of cancer. The activity lifted his spirits. She has also helped single moms who are struggling financially with getting their yards mowed for free. Part of what makes our country so great is the willingness of ordinary Americans to go above and beyond to selflessly give back to others. Volunteerism is one of the cornerstones of our society and part of the fabric that unites us.

It is clear that Ms. Carter-Harvey has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for her service.

HONORING THE ARC OF NEW  
JERSEY'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. KEAN of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my warmest congratulations to the Arc of New Jersey as they celebrate their 75th anniversary.

For the past 75 years, the Arc of New Jersey has admirably supported individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They have made a significant impact by securing quality education and healthcare, equipping disabled individuals with vital workplace skills, and advocating for this community at all levels of government. The Arc of New Jersey has certainly improved the quality of life for thousands of New Jersey residents, and the Seventh District is both proud and grateful to have such an outstanding organization operating in our communities.

I wish the Arc of New Jersey a wonderful 75th anniversary. I thank them again for their dedication and passion to making our communities safer, healthier, and more inclusive places to live and work. I have no doubt that this organization will continue to thrive in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. RICHARD HUDSON**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes due to a weather delay at the airport which prevented me from getting to Washington in time. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 123; YEA on Roll Call No. 122; YEA on Roll Call No. 121; and YEA on Roll Call No. 120.

RECOGNIZING MAYOR D'AMBROSIO

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions made in our community by one of my constituents, Mayor Vincent "Mike" D'Ambrosio, who volunteers at least 30 hours per week in service to the Town of St. Leo. He's been on the Commission since 2020, and has been Mayor since 2022. Under his leadership, the Town has made many advances, including:

Increasing Public Advocacy for Town needs by meeting with state and federal lawmakers, resulting in the Town's first appropriation in its 131-year history.

Hosting seven "Coffee with the Mayor" events attended by more than 250 people.

Facilitating improved communication and involvement with key stakeholders, including: Saint Leo Abbey, Holy Name Monastery, Discovery Fellowship, and Saint Leo University.

Building partnerships to expand participation in: the Saint Leo University Tree Lighting and

Christmas Village, the Greased Pig Contest at the Saint Leo University Fall Festival, and the Dade City Chamber of Commerce Access East Pasco.

Purchasing land to develop a Town Center which will serve as a local gathering spot that enriches the quality of life of the residents and the community.

Establishing the Town's first internship program.

Mayor Mike is charitable, humble, kind, and passionate. His volunteerism with the Saint Leo Sporting Clays Team and the Church Truth Seekers has also been invaluable. While there may only be 24 hours in a day, Mayor Mike dedicates almost every hour of his days to helping others.

It is clear that Mayor Vincent "Mike" D'Ambrosio has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for his service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ROGER WILLIAMS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, due to a personal family matter, I was unable to be in D.C. and vote on April 15, 2024. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 123.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

**HON. RAUL RUIZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 120.

RECOGNIZING DAVID GONZALEZ

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 16, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions made in our community by one of my constituents, David Gonzalez, who is a valued volunteer with several community organizations in Hernando County and has been a long-time employee of our community's electric cooperative, Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative. In this capacity, he has served as the face of the organization in the community, presenting millions of dollars in credit refunds to local governments and school boards. Mr. Gonzalez has also served in key leadership roles on the Board of Directors for several non-profits in Hernando with the highest levels of dedication, including: the Hernando Chamber of Commerce, Hernando Education Foundation, Hernando Economic Development Council, Oak Hill Hospital Board, and the United Way of Hernando Board. Whenever there has been a need, Mr. Gonzalez has stepped forward to address it, without concern for who gets the credit. A truly humble problem-solver, Mr.