

Third District, and I am honored to celebrate her today.

Mr. Speaker, once more I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Judge Sara J. Smolenski for her commitment to public service, justice, and the people of Kent County. I hope her retirement is restful and filled with joy.

**CONGRATULATING MAJOR GENERAL KENNETH S. HARA ON HIS SERVICE AND RETIREMENT**

**HON. JILL N. TOKUDA**

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 25, 2024*

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Major General Kenneth S. Hara, the Adjutant General of the State of Hawaii, on his retirement from the Hawaii National Guard after a celebrated 40 years of service to our state and our nation.

As Hawaii's adjutant general, Major General Hara serves as commander of the Hawaii National Guard and the director of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency. In those roles, he has led the state's response to some of the most challenging and complex emergencies in Hawaii's history. In March 2020, just a few months after Major General Hara became the adjutant general, Governor Josh Green asked him to serve as the state's incident commander for the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to his leadership, Hawaii's response to the pandemic was among the most successful in the country.

Over the course of his career, Major General Hara also served as the dual status commander of Joint Task Force-50 in response to the Kilauea eruption and Hurricane Lane in 2018 and as commander of Task Force KOA after the 2006 Hawaii Island earthquake. And as a First Lieutenant over thirty years ago, he played a key role in supporting the state's response to Hurricane Iniki in 1992.

But what I will most remember Major General Hara for is his role in leading the state's response to the August 2023 wildfires on Maui and supporting their recovery. As the freshman representative for Hawaii's Second Congressional District that spans all eight of our islands, I am grateful to Major General Hara for his work in coordinating the state's response to this unprecedented disaster in our state's history alongside our local and federal partners.

Throughout his career in the National Guard, Major General Hara deployed three times. In 2005, he deployed to Baghdad, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as commander of the 299th Infantry's 2nd Battalion. In 2008, he deployed to Kuwait as deputy commander of the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. Then, in 2012, this time as commander of the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, he deployed to Kandahar in Afghanistan.

His many awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star with one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with three Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Aviator Badge, and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

Major General Hara's career continued a legacy of service that began with his late fa-

ther, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Hara. Alongside his three brothers, Major General Hara has ensured that the Hara name is synonymous with service to our state and the nation.

This career dedicated to service has also been a family commitment, and I would be remiss if I did not also thank Major General Hara's wife Myoung and his children Kristin, Julia, Nichole, Justin, and Alicia. Their support and sacrifice made his success possible for all of us.

As he and his entire family transition to a new chapter, I proudly join them in celebrating a tremendous career that will continue to inspire and motivate future generations of leaders. But even more importantly, I wish them all the best in enjoying a well-earned retirement.

Mahalo to Ken for all that he has done and given to Hawaii and our country.

**RECOGNIZING STAFF SERGEANT DONALD LYNN McDONALD, USMC, RETIRED WITH A CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION**

**HON. PETE SESSIONS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 25, 2024*

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor retired USMC Staff Sergeant Donald Lynn McDonald of Groesbeck, Texas, by presenting him with a Congressional Veteran Commendation. His dedication to veteran's causes in retirement reflects the ideals of our Country's core values.

Born in Mexia, Texas, Donald McDonald answered the call to serve by joining the United States Marine Corps in the 1970s. Over more than six years of active duty, he demonstrated exceptional commitment and skill. Serving as an Electric Systems Technician, he began his active service in 1971 in Beaufort, South Carolina. His exemplary performance earned him the M-14 Marksman Classification, the National Defense Service Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, and a Letter of Appreciation, highlighting his professionalism and dedication to duty.

Upon his honorable discharge, Staff Sergeant McDonald continued his legacy of service within Limestone County. He became an active member of the Limestone County History Committee, where he focused on locating individuals in cemeteries and assisting families in finding their lost relatives. His efforts have provided closure and solace to many families, underscoring his compassion and commitment to his community.

Currently, he serves as the Limestone County Veteran Service Officer. In this role, he has achieved accreditation and has been instrumental in assisting numerous veterans throughout the community. His tireless work ensures that veterans and their families receive the benefits and support they have rightfully earned. Donald's unwavering dedication reflects a deep respect for the sacrifices of his fellow service members and a genuine desire to enhance their quality of life.

This nomination is not only a tribute to Donald's profound commitment to his fellow citizens but also a recognition of the entire Veterans of Foreign Wars community in Limestone County. His selfless dedication em-

bodies the highest ideals of service and citizenship.

I am honored to award retired USMC Staff Sergeant Donald Lynn McDonald with a Congressional Veteran Commendation.

**CELEBRATING RIDGWAY, PA BICENTENNIAL YEAR**

**HON. GLENN THOMPSON**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 25, 2024*

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ridgway, Pennsylvania's Bicentennial year.

In 1817, Philadelphia shipping merchant Jacob Ridgway purchased 120,000 acres of land in Northwest Pennsylvania.

Forty thousand of these acres would officially become Elk County on April 18, 1843 with Ridgway as the county seat.

According to historians, the town of Ridgway was established in 1824 when one of Mr. Ridgway's nephews, James Gillis, convinced Ridgway that his land, which was filled with an abundance of lumber, could become a lucrative business opportunity.

In the past two hundred years, Ridgway has evolved into a thriving community where the lumber industry continues to flourish.

Ridgway is home to the Ridgway Chainsaw Carving Rendezvous.

What began as a shared passion of family and friends enthusiastic about wood carving has grown into the largest chainsaw carving gathering of its kind, attracting visitors from across the globe.

Mr. Speaker, Ridgway, PA, is home to a vibrant community, and I hope you will join me in wishing Ridgway a happy 200th-year celebration.

**RECOGNIZING PAMELA EVETTE**

**HON. LISA C. McCLAIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 25, 2024*

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to Lt. Governor Pamela Evette, who was named a 2024 She Leads Woman of Distinction.

Pamela Evette, the 93rd Lieutenant Governor, and the first female Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina, demonstrates God's love for families and children. She has worked to support early childhood education, school reading programs, school choice, and South Carolina non-profits. Pamela is also a staunch supporter of parental rights, the military, and law enforcement knowing the importance of a safe environment for the future of our country and the next generation.

An entrepreneur and businesswoman, Pamela has received numerous accolades, including the ATHENA Leadership Award and the Enterprising Woman of the Year Award. Since taking office in 2019, Pamela has been laser-focused on utilizing her professional background to highlight South Carolina's thriving small business ecosystem, attract new business to the state, and promote innovative public-private partnerships. To help highlight and protect South Carolina's natural resources,

Pamela created the Grab-A-Bag South Carolina annual statewide litter clean up initiative in partnership with Palmetto Pride. She also joined the SC7 Expedition to raise awareness for floodwater prevention.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this inspiring woman of distinction.

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CELEBRATING THE REMARKABLE  
AND CONTINUED LEADERSHIP  
AND SERVICE OF MR. SCOTT  
BIELER

**HON. NICHOLAS A. LANGWORTHY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 25, 2024*

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the remarkable and continued leadership and service of Mr. Scott Bieler.

As the President and CEO of West Herr, Scott leads the largest privately-owned automotive group in New York State, and one of the biggest in the United States. All told, there are over 3,000 employees across 39 locations in Erie, Niagara, Monroe, and Ontario counties, with new expansions and locations always on the horizon.

Scott has continued to go above and beyond, and while he is known as generous—

few know the extent of his philanthropy throughout the community. Scott is actively involved and supports many charitable and community initiatives, including the Roswell Park Alliance Foundation, Visit Buffalo Niagara, and Daemen University.

On Thursday, September 26th, Mr. Scott Bieler will be honored at Buffalo Niagara Partnership's Second Annual Economic Development Summit, where he will receive the 2024 Industry Leader Award. On behalf of Western New York, I am proud to congratulate my friend on his many accomplishments, and I join him in celebrating this well-deserved award.

I therefore ask that this legislative body now join me in celebrating Mr. Bieler's accomplishments, along with his continued dedication to leadership and community service.

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#### SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Com-

mittee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, September 26, 2024 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

#### MEETINGS SCHEDULED

NOVEMBER 13

10 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Matthew James Marzano, of Illinois, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Matthew Kaplan, of Maryland, to be Federal Co-chairperson of the Great Lakes Authority, and 43 General Services Administration resolutions.

SD-406