

one of these grandchildren, taking the harvests of his garden to share with neighbors and friends.

I recognize Isidoro Tudela Cabrera and celebrate his over four decades' long commitment to agriculture. I thank him for all the nourishment he has gown for those of us who call the Northern Marianas our home.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF DR. RICHARD K. VEDDER

HON. TROY BALDERSON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Mr. BALDERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the work of Dr. Richard K. Vedder, a resident of Ohio's 12th Congressional District and an exemplary figure in the fields of higher education and economics.

Dr. Vedder is a Distinguished Professor of Economics Emeritus at Ohio University and the founding director of the Center for College Affordability and Productivity in Washington, DC.

His contributions as a member of the Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education illustrate his commitment to reforming the higher education system. His research and proposed reforms address critical issues, including the high cost of education, the suppression of free speech on campuses, and the privatization of education by giving teachers a financial stake in schools.

Dr. Vedder's dedication to education goes beyond words. His fifty years of teaching experience at Ohio University, the University of Colorado, Claremont Men's College, and the MARA Institute of Technology reflect his lifelong commitment to educating others.

Dr. Vedder will be deservedly recognized at the Ohio Board of Trustees Symposium later this month.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF OCEAN UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER IN BRICK, NEW JERSEY

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 40th Anniversary of the Hackensack Meridian Ocean University Medical Center in Brick, N.J., located in the Fourth Congressional District of New Jersey.

On July 4, 1984, the medical center opened its doors as Brick Hospital, part of the Northern Ocean Hospital System. Its roots go back even farther, due to its ties to Point Pleasant Hospital, which opened in 1918 with four rooms in the home of Dr. Frank Denniston. Point Pleasant Hospital became part of the North Ocean Hospital System in the 1980s, growing to 120 acute care beds by 1984 and serving patients with 200 physicians and 400 staff. Point Pleasant Hospital had 17,000 emergency room visits and 3,600 admissions.

Today the hospital boasts 317 licensed beds, another 40 rehabilitation beds, nearly 800 physicians and 2,600 staff, plus over 120

residents and fellows. Admissions have risen to over 12,500 per year, while emergency department visits have now topped 85,700 in the past year, including visits to its Ocean Care Center in Point Pleasant Beach.

The hospital takes pride in its pursuit of excellence in nursing care, as seen via its distinction as a Magnet-credentialed facility, enjoying numerous recognitions for quality care in areas such as joint replacement, stroke, colon cancer surgeries. The hospital leadership has worked hard to offer advanced care, including heart and vascular services, orthopedics and advanced surgical procedures with cutting-edge robotic technology and both inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation.

The hospital's pursuit to deliver the best care possible was rewarded in 2021 with a prestigious "University" designation, which acknowledges exceptional teaching programs in the contributions to delivering high quality care.

Ocean University Medical Center acute care service is enhanced by its Johnson Rehabilitation Institute, which helps to meet the hospital's goal to provide comprehensive inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation right on campus. That convenience aims at helping people regain their independence and reach their highest possible degree of functionality as quickly as possible following illness or injury.

The accolades over those 40 years are too numerous to mention, but I recognize just a few of the latest the hospital has achieved: U.S. News & World Report 2024–25 recognition as a High Performing hospital in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, colon cancer surgery, hip replacement, knee replacement, leukemia, lymphoma & myeloma, and lung cancer surgery; The "A" Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade in the Spring 2023 Hospital Safety Grade report; The American College of Cardiology (ACC) 2023 Platinum Performance Award-National Cardiovascular Data Registry for Chest Pain-MI; 2022 certification by the ACC for HeartCARE designation; The Healthgrades' 2023 Patient Safety Excellence Award, placing it among the top 5 percent of all short-term acute care hospitals reporting patient safety; Recognition by the American Heart Association in its 2023 Get With The Guidelines awards program, earning Gold Plus Achievement Awards in the categories of: Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite; Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll; and Target: Heart Failure, and; Recognition by Practice Greenhealth in 2023 as a Top 25 Hospital in the nation for Environmental Excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that the future of Ocean University Medical Center looks bright. The hospital is now a member of the Hackensack Meridian Health Network, with 18 hospitals and more than 36,000 team members, 7,000 physicians and 500 patient care locations.

With the recent completion of the \$19.5 million Dr. Robert H. and Mary Ellen Harris Heart and Vascular Center, Ocean University Medical Center now boasts one of the Garden State's most advanced centers for heart and vascular diagnosis and treatment.

Additionally, the hospital hosts a variety of local classes and programs to help people quit smoking, manage diabetes, treat stroke and brain injuries, identify heart attack risks and prevention methods, lower risk of falls, take advantage of health screenings or with other quality of life matters.

These programs complement the many health care services and accolades I just cited, and together they combine to help the hospital deliver on its mission of providing quality healthcare, and simultaneously developing students, residents, fellows, faculty and an overall health care environment that strives for the highest possible quality of healthcare for all patients.

Their approach is unique because it utilizes the best components of different, evidence-based teaching methods, and structures curriculum specifically to give students what they need to excel in today's modern, technically demanding clinical settings.

Mr. Speaker, you, I and many of our colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives host the annual Congressional Art Competition for high schools in congressional districts across America.

It is with pride that I note Ocean University Medical Center hosted my annual Congressional High School Art Competition in 2023. In 2025, the hospital will once again host art students, their teachers and parents. The 2023 month-long exhibition was so warmly welcomed by staff, patients and visitors that I am eager for the show to open in the Spring of 2025.

Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, October 5, 2024, the leaders and staff at Ocean University Medical Center will officially celebrate four decades of delivering health care to the Brick, Point Pleasant and surrounding communities . . . truly a noteworthy accomplishment in which they should take great pride.

I congratulate President and Chief Hospital Executive Frank Citara, the Board of Trustees, the Foundation, the entire medical staff and all employees of the Ocean University Medical Center family on reaching this milestone.

HONORING GISELA ALVAREZ AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Gisela Alvarez is a proud flight attendant with Southwest Airlines. In 1993, she started her career with the company as a customer service agent, eventually transferring to her current position as a flight attendant. She has been awarded many honors, including the Flight Attendant of the Year in her Orlando base and the coveted President's Award from Southwest Airlines.

Her passion for understanding obstacles and breaking through barriers led her to select and complete a Bachelor of Arts in Ethnic Studies from Bowling Green State University. Her commitment to fighting for better working conditions, especially for those who don't have a voice, is evident in her involvement in her community, at work, and beyond.

In the early 2000's, she was elected as a shop steward with the Transport Workers Union (TWU) LOCAL 556. She currently serves on the Language of Destination and Origin (LODO) subcommittee.

Since 2010, she has volunteered with the nonprofit organization Giving4Hope, where she has traveled around the world to help

families and children in need. Through this organization, Gisela has also helped coordinate supply efforts to areas impacted by hurricanes such as Irma and Maria. She has assisted with organizing over 20 flights with aid and water filtration systems to the Bahamas and Puerto Rico. She currently sits on the board for Giving4Hope.

Since 2018, she has been a member of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA), a group that is a leading advocacy group for Latino/a worker's rights in this country. Gisela is currently the vice president of the Central Florida chapter.

Gisela loves participating in the Orange County Public Schools "Teach-In Day" program, where she volunteers her time to talk with students about the importance of academics in relation to careers and the future of the airline industry. Gisela also takes time to support the community with voter registration drives, citizenship clinics, and food drives, to name a few.

As the daughter of Ramon and Leticia Alvarez, who came to the United States from Medellin, Colombia, for a better life, she understands the importance of helping others and treating everyone with kindness. She contributes her success, her hard work ethic, and the value of treating everyone with respect, to them. Gisela is blessed to see such positive traits, habits, and willingness to volunteer reflected in her daughter, Zoey.

RECOGNIZING DR. RICKEY LEE HURST WITH A CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present Dr. Rickey Lee Hurst, of Nacogdoches, Texas, with a Congressional Veteran Commendation. His service to this Nation and community speaks to the best of Texas.

The son of a former B92 Pilot who flew during WWII, service to God, family and country runs deep within Rick and his family. While attending Texas Tech University, the war was raging in Vietnam. As many fine young American men did during that time, he registered for the draft without hesitation. His number was not called. He completed his education and training in dentistry and ultimately as an oral maxillofacial surgeon without pause. He then established his private practice in Nacogdoches, Texas, that operated from 1980 to 2022.

On September 11, 2001, America was attacked, and Ricky felt a deep call to go where he was needed most. He left his family, prosperity, and comfortable life in Nacogdoches, Texas, to volunteer for the U.S. Army at war. On September 18, 2002, he received a direct commission as a captain in the U.S. Army Reserve and just a year later was called to Active Duty for Operation Enduring Freedom. He served with the TF 44 MED/452nd Combat Support Hospital in Bagram, Afghanistan, and then later he was called again to Active Duty for Operation Iraqi Freedom during the surge in Iraq where he was responsible for all head and neck assessments and treatment in deliv-

ering care for U.S. soldiers, Marines, coalition forces, Iraqi Army Troops, Iraqi police, as well as injured civilians procedures and consistently made critical contributions to the surgical mission of the hospital and task force.

Ricky teaches Christian apologetics at Regents Academy and serves as a mentor to students and staff. He and his wife volunteer as tutors for children and adults in the community and they participate in Mission activities at home and abroad. He serves as an elder at Grace Bible Church in Nacogdoches and assists with the Regents Academy BIG Serve event every year, where students from Regents go out into the community and assist various non-profit organizations with area beautification and handyman-type repairs to their properties.

It is my honor to award Dr. Rickey Lee Hurst with a Congressional Veteran Commendation.

TRIBUTE TO RANDY A. RECORD

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to and congratulate Randy A. Record for his 24 years of dedicated service to the Board of Directors of Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD). EMWD is a water, wastewater, and recycled water agency representing a population of nearly one million people in western Riverside County.

Mr. Record represents Division 3 on EMWD's Board of Directors, which includes the cities of Hemet and San Jacinto, and surrounding unincorporated areas. During the nearly past quarter-century, he became one of California's leading water policy officials and helped create a more, reliable water supply for tens of millions of domestic and agricultural customers.

During his time on EMWD's Board, Mr. Record served as the President of the Association of California Water Agencies, the Monday Morning Group's Water Committee Chair, and the Chairman of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan). He was also a vocal advocate in support of EMWD's relationships with local Native American tribes and was instrumental in the Soboba Settlement Act that was enacted by Congress in 2008. In addition, he is widely credited with helping bridge the gap between urban and agricultural users during California's drought in the mid-2010s.

Mr. Record has been a leading advocate for state and federal investments in western water infrastructure and for the adoption of drought-tolerant landscaping in public spaces to reduce water waste.

Mr. Record was preceded on the Board of Directors at both EMWD and Metropolitan by his father, Clayton Record. His retirement from EMWD will allow Mr. Record more time to focus on advancing innovative approaches to sustainable agriculture.

On a personal note, I count Randy as one of my longest and closest friends. I have appreciated his advice, humor, and support over the years and look forward to many more.

I thank Mr. Record for his friendship, leadership, and his lasting impact in creating a better

water supply future for the western United States.

REMEMBERING BILL LUCY

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a profound tribute to William "Bill" Lucy, a giant of the civil rights and labor movements, who passed on Tuesday, September 24, at the age of 90. Mr. Lucy, a native of Memphis, was a 34-year-old working for the Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) when he was sent to Memphis to work with the striking sanitation workers in February of 1968. He is credited with the iconic "I AM A MAN" placard messages and with encouraging Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to come to Memphis to support the cause. Those efforts led to the creation of AFSCME Local 1733 which is still proudly representing local public employees. Lucy was born on November 26, 1933, and attended schools in Memphis until his father was recruited to work as a welder in the California shipyards during World War II. Lucy graduated from high school in 1951 and studied civil engineering at the University of California-Berkeley. He then worked in the shipyards before being hired by the Contra Costa County government as an engineering aide. In that position, he strengthened an employee association into a real union, AFSCME's Local 1675, before heading east to Washington in 1966 to work at AFSCME's national headquarters as executive assistant to its International President Jerry Wurf. He was working at the headquarters office in Detroit when he was called to Memphis to monitor a dispute between the city and striking sanitation workers, who were not officially affiliated with AFSCME. He joined the negotiations on their behalf with a city that deemed their strike an illegal walkout and refused to acknowledge the workers or their demands for improved working conditions, union recognition, and respect. He and the Reverend Malcolm Blackburn helped devise the iconic I AM A MAN placards that galvanized not just local workers but world opinion. After Martin Luther King was assassinated on April 4, and cities across the country burned, President Johnson urged an end to the strike largely on the workers' terms.

On a personal note, I considered Mr. Lucy a good friend and have valued his advice and guidance throughout my time in public office. I particularly cherish the 2007 William Lucy Award I received from the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists of Tennessee and Kentucky that he founded. Mr. Lucy was a tall and commanding figure whose presence was striking and justly demanded respect and attention.

Mr. Lucy became the international secretary-treasurer of AFSCME and served there for 38 years. During that time, he helped found the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists to counter the neutral stand the AFL-CIO took in the 1972 presidential race, contending that re-electing Richard Nixon threatened civil rights and labor progress. Mr. Lucy was later a central figure in the boycotts and campaigns for divestments from state employee pension funds aimed at the white South African apartheid system. In the mid 1980s, he helped