

RECOGNIZING OFFICER JACKLYN RODRIGUEZ OF THE PHARR POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2025

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Officer Jacklyn Rodriguez of the Pharr Police Department in Pharr, Texas, for her exceptional courage, professionalism, and dedication to service as a Mental Health Officer.

Officer Rodriguez embodies the compassion and commitment that defines the best of law enforcement. Each day, she responds to some of the most difficult and unpredictable situations. Through her calm demeanor and skilled communication, she has helped de-escalate countless mental health crises, ensuring that vulnerable individuals receive the care they need while keeping our community safe.

Her leadership has transformed how the department approaches mental health intervention. Under her guidance, the Pharr Police Department's Mental Health Unit earned statewide recognition, receiving the Martha Arbuckle Award from the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities. Officer Rodriguez also spearheaded the department's first "Walking to Wellness Fair," an event that brought residents together to promote wellness, awareness, and unity across the community.

Officer Rodriguez's service reflects the highest ideals of her profession: courage, compassion in moments of crisis, and an unwavering commitment to the people of Pharr. Her example reminds us that true public safety is rooted in understanding your community and humanity.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent Officer Jacklyn Rodriguez and to recognize the profound impact she continues to have on the people of Pharr and all of South Texas.

HONORING THE VICTIMS OF THE
1961 PLANE CRASH

HON. RYAN MACKENZIE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2025

Mr. MACKENZIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on behalf of the people of the Lehigh Valley and the Poconos, to honor the memory of the 29 victims who lost their lives in a tragic plane crash on November 8, 1961, including four-teen young men from Bethlehem.

These young soldiers, most just out of high school, were on their way to basic training at Fort Jackson when their flight went down outside Richmond, Virginia. In an instant, families lost sons and brothers. Our community lost neighbors, classmates, and friends. And our Nation lost young patriots preparing to serve in defense of freedom during one of the darkest chapters of the Cold War.

In the aftermath, their sacrifice led to reforms in military air transport standards—changes that have saved countless lives in the decades since. What was once a devastating loss became a catalyst for increased accountability and safety.

Today, a monument in Bethlehem stands as a reminder of the price these families paid and the values these young men embodied: service, duty, and love of country.

May we never forget their names, their courage, or the community that still feels their absence more than sixty years later. And may their memory continue to inspire gratitude and resolve in all of us who benefit from the freedoms they never had the chance to fully experience.

We remember them and include their names in the RECORD:

Albert W. Andreas, Robert S. Bedics, Barry A. Brandt, Donald F. Doyle, Thomas D. Gasda, Richard W. Jones, Joseph J. Kobli, Stephen M. Kobli, Leroy Kranch, Jr., Thomas A. Motko, Michael Placotar, Albert J. Rice, John D. Schuler, and Charles D. Yeakel.

HONORING TSgt NY VU AS ONE
OF CALIFORNIA'S 8TH CONGRES-
SIONAL DISTRICT'S WOMEN OF
THE YEAR

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2025

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of TSgt Ny Vu, as she is honored as one of California's 8th Congressional District's Women of the Year for her extraordinary service, leadership, and innovation which have had a lasting impact on our military and our community. As the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of Financial Operations for the 60th Comptroller Squadron, Sergeant Vu leads the largest financial team in Air Mobility Command, supporting over 16,000 personnel and managing a \$1 billion civilian pay portfolio. Her leadership ensures financial readiness across three wings and 11 Combatant Commands. During a critical staffing shortage, Sergeant Vu stepped into a Company Grade Officer role, executing over \$1 million in payments and restoring financial mobility for 7,000 members in just 12 days. She has led joint-service financial operations, standardized procedures, and mentored junior officers, strengthening leadership across the force. Her innovations, including an Air Force-wide fraud detection tool and deployment of mobile financial systems, have modernized operations and reduced pay errors to a five-year low. She also contributed to designing a new global disbursing system now in use at 78 bases.

Born in Rach Gia, Vietnam, Sergeant Vu immigrated to the U.S. after spending time in a refugee camp. Her service since 2006 includes assignments in Europe, Asia, and four deployments to the Middle East. Her resilience and excellence have earned her multiple awards and promotions. Her service embodies the highest ideals of the Air Force and the American spirit. On behalf of the people of California's 8th Congressional District, it is my pleasure to honor and recognize TSgt Ny Vu for her invaluable contributions to our community.

HONORING COLONEL RICHARD S. FRANKS ON THE CELEBRATION OF HIS 86TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2025

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to join family, friends, and the congregation members of Zion Baptist Church in Waterbury, Connecticut as they gather to celebrate the 86th birthday of Colonel Richard S. Franks.

The third of six children and the eldest son, Colonel Franks was born and raised in Waterbury, Connecticut, spending his childhood in both the North End and the City's southern section of Town Plot. He attended Walsh Grade School and graduated from Leavenworth High School before pursuing his collegiate studies. Colonel Franks went on to earn his Bachelor's Degree from North Carolina Central University and then his Master's Degree from Howard University. His studies prepared him for a career in social work, where he specialized as a psychiatric social worker.

As was the same for so many at the time, the Vietnam War played a defining role in Colonel Franks' life path. It was either get drafted and almost certainly be sent straight to the front lines or seek assistance in finding a way to use his professional skills to aid in the war effort. He sought the advice and guidance of then Congressman John Monagan. It was through these conversations and the efforts of Congressman Monagan that he joined the United States Army. Though his enlistment committed him to four years of service, it also allowed him to quickly earn the rank of 2nd Lieutenant enabling him to be assigned to a stateside military/veteran hospital where his professional background was put to good use working with injured and returning soldiers.

He served four years active duty and then joined the Army Reserves where he continued to serve and earn the rank of full Colonel. After his honorable discharge and while serving as a reservist, Colonel Franks also worked for the Connecticut Veterans' Affairs Department using his skills to help his fellow veterans. Today, he is without doubt the oldest Black retired Colonel in Connecticut and likely one of the nation's as well.

In addition to his service to our nation and his fellow veterans, Colonel Franks has also been an active member of his community, particularly with the Zion Baptist Church, serving in a number of leadership roles including as a Trustee and Deacon. He and his wife, Dolores, have lived in the quaint community of Prospect, Connecticut for more than fifty years, raising two children and relishing the joys of being grandparents to three and great-grandparents to two. He continues to enjoy time with his five siblings as well—three sisters, Joan, Bonita, and Ruthie—as well as his two brothers, Marvin and former Connecticut Congressman Gary Franks. Today, as he marks his 86th birthday, he can reflect on a life well-lived and know that his many contributions have enriched countless lives and left an indelible mark on his community. I am honored to have this opportunity to rise today to wish Colonel Richard S. Franks a very happy birthday.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF RUDY
CORDOVA**HON. J. LUIS CORREA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2025

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Rudy Cordova, a beloved figure in Santa Ana whose spirit, vision, and generosity left a profound mark on our city and the 46th Congressional District. Rudy was a community builder. He believed in the power of culture, art, and connection to bring people together. He created space for artists, for creativity, and for community to flourish. His work gave life to possibilities for those who may have otherwise gone unseen or unheard. His voice became the voice of those around him.

Rudy lived as a proud "Santanero," someone rooted in the place and people he loved deeply. He drew people in by opening doors, literally and figuratively, to opportunities, gatherings, dialogue, and artistic expression.

The canvas of his life was colored by commitment to cultural heritage, to mutual respect, and to inclusion of everyone in our community.

His legacy will be measured in the moments of human connections he fostered. The young artist who found a gallery wall because of him. The neighbor who found a place at the table because he made it available. The community that felt supported and heard.

As we commemorate Rudy's legacy, let us also commit ourselves to carry forward his vision of open-hearted community and to serve with the same kindness and courage that Rudy embodied. In the days ahead, may we honor his memory by continuing the work he started—by making room, by creating connection, and by telling our stories together.

Rudy Cordova may no longer be with us in person, but his presence lives on in the lives he touched, the art he nurtured, the community he strengthened, and the promise he gave to every person who dared to imagine a better tomorrow.

Let us remember him, celebrate him, and act in his spirit.

TRIBUTE TO DONALD L. CARLSON

HON. MARK E. AMODEI

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2025

Mr. AMODEI of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Donald L. Carlson, who passed away peacefully at his home in Carson City, Nevada. Mr. Carlson was a native of rural Davis County, Iowa, but I believe he would have considered Nevada his true home. His son, Clifford D. Carlson, shared that his father described Nevada as "the land of opportunity, not only for others who migrated to the Silver State, but particularly for himself."

He moved out west in 1974 to pursue a career in education, specifically a professor of sociology at Western Nevada Community College. During his tenure, he served on WNCC's Faculty Senate, was recognized as an Outstanding Faculty Member in 1991, and received the Nevada Board of Regents' Academic Advisor Award in 2003.

Mr. Carlson also owned Survey Research Systems, a political opinion research company, to study and analyze what motivates voters. While he agreed to represent clients all over the Nation, his particular interest was polling the needs of Nevadans and ensuring their policy goals for elected officials were heard.

I owe immense gratitude to Mr. Carlson, who played a pivotal role in both my personal and professional life. He was deliberate in choosing whom to support, and I am deeply thankful for his support of me over the years. While we did not always see eye to eye, I always valued his insight, honesty, and the lessons he shared. He was an exceptional teacher, not only in the classroom, but also to countless individuals he inspired and guided with principle in their pursuit of public service throughout our great state.

On behalf of the 2nd Congressional District of Nevada, I want to recognize and honor the extraordinary life of my friend Don Carlson, and the lasting impact he made on our community. He was a remarkable man, and while he will be deeply missed, his legacy will not be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING OFFICER PEDRO
BALDERAS, JR. OF THE ALAMO
POLICE DEPARTMENT**HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2025

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Officer Pedro Balderas, Jr. of the Alamo Police Department in Alamo, Texas, for his exceptional service to his community.

Since joining the department, Officer Balderas has gone above and beyond the call of duty, earning the respect of his colleagues and the gratitude of the community he serves. From his early days as a patrol officer, he demonstrated initiative, integrity, and a tireless work ethic. Through his proactive policing and sharp investigative instincts, he quickly became known for his ability to identify criminal patterns, develop intelligence, and pursue offenders with determination.

As a Major Crimes Investigator, Officer Balderas has played a pivotal role in solving complex cases that require persistence, analytical skill, and sound judgment. His leadership has contributed to numerous successful prosecutions and the dismantling of criminal operations that have threatened the safety of our communities.

In addition to his service with the Alamo Police Department, Officer Balderas has distinguished himself as a Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force Officer. Through close collaboration with state and federal partners, he has led major narcotics investigations that resulted in significant drug seizures, arrests of key figures in organized crime, and the recovery of substantial assets through federal and state forfeiture processes.

Beyond his investigative accomplishments, Officer Balderas is known for being a mentor to his colleagues and upholding the highest professional standards. His integrity and commitment to justice embody the very best of South Texas.

Mr. Speaker, Officer Pedro Balderas, Jr. is a shining example of the courage and dedication that define South Texas law enforcement. I am proud to represent Officer Balderas and recognize his outstanding contributions and thank him for his continued service to our region.

HONORING MARY DAVIS AS SHE
RETIRES**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2025

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a leader who has been a tremendous advocate for the disability community: Mary Davis. After more than four decades of working for the Special Olympics, including ten years as its Chief Executive Officer, she will start her much-deserved retirement at the end of this year. In that time, she has accomplished a great deal for people with disabilities in America and around the world.

A proud daughter of Ireland, Mary first became involved in the Special Olympics as a volunteer when she was studying physical education as a university student. In 1985, she helped organize the Special Olympics European Games in Dublin—the first regional games the organization ever hosted. She continued to rise through the ranks, eventually receiving an appointment to serve as National Director of Special Olympics Ireland in 1989. She further distinguished herself during her tenure as CEO of the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games and later as President and Managing Director of Special Olympics Europe-Eurasia, which led to her appointment as CEO of Special Olympics International in 2016. I remember seeing Mary not long after, in 2018, at the 50th anniversary celebration of the Special Olympics. I was greatly impressed with her leadership, vision, and passionate commitment to creating opportunities for these Special Olympians to demonstrate their talent.

The first Special Olympics World Summer Games, held in Chicago in 1968, featured roughly 1,000 athletes from the U.S. and Canada competing in three sports. The most recent World Summer Games, held in Berlin in 2023, saw nearly 7,000 athletes from 176 nations compete across 24 different events. Crucially, local, national, and regional Special Olympics events are organized every single day around the globe, with more than 100,000 held each year. We owe the growth of this remarkable tradition in no small part to Mary Davis. She has helped show the world all that these Special Olympians are capable of, and she has shown them and the rest of the disability community how much we value their contributions to society.

For that, she has my thanks and the gratitude of this Congress. Eunice Kennedy Shriver—the founder of the Special Olympics and my dear friend—once said: 'do it well, finish it properly, and move on.' Mr. Speaker, Mary has done well, finished properly, and now is moving on to what I hope will be a relaxing and meaningful retirement. I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing her all the best as she starts this next chapter.