

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

DESTROYING UNNECESSARY, MIS- ALIGNED, AND PROHIBITIVE RED TAPE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 2, 2025

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, today we will vote on the Destroying Unnecessary, Misaligned, and Prohibitive (DUMP) Red Tape Act, which would require the SBA's Office of Advocacy to codify a Red Tape Hotline to receive submissions on burdensome regulations and to report on those submissions. I will vote "no" because this bill is redundant—there is already a hotline in place for reporting red tape. Rather than improving the process, this bill would create an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy that would hinder, not help, the ongoing work of the SBA's Office of Advocacy.

RECOGNIZING MERCER HEALTH ON THEIR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of Mercer Health, a dedicated healthcare system in Mercer County, Ohio. For seventy-five years, Mercer Health has been dedicated to providing excellent healthcare to the residents of Mercer County and the surrounding region. The hard work and spirit shown by staff have improved the health and quality of life for countless patients.

Founded in 1950, Mercer Health, known then as Our Lady of Mercy Hospital, was established to provide care to the citizens in Coldwater, Ohio and surrounding area. Seeing a need for a hospital, concerned citizens banded together to open the forty-eight-bed hospital. In 1969, the Sisters of Mercy who operated the hospital approached the board and advised them that they could no longer continue its operations. Over the next few years, seven townships in Mercer County stepped forward and took over the hospital. They created a joint township hospital district and renamed the hospital Mercer County Joint Township Community Hospital in 1972.

Over the decades, the hospital grew into the healthcare system it is today. It began to open new departments and expanded to open new medical centers across the county. By 2004, the remaining townships in the county joined the original seven to help in the operation of the health district. To reflect the hospital and health district commitment to service all the residents of Mercer County, the board renamed the health district Mercer Health. Since then, Mercer Health has continued to expand and grow, opening new offices and campuses to house their network of medical services.

Mr. Speaker, by celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of Mercer Health, the county and its residents can recognize the outstanding achievements of the staff and pride that they have in the healthcare system's success. I Congratulate Mercer Health on this momentous milestone. I thank them for all they do to improve our communities' health.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE JACQUALINE BERGER

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Councilmember Jacqueline Berger, a woman whose influence can be seen and felt throughout the Western New York community by colleagues and community members of Amherst, New York.

In 1978, Councilmember Berger earned her bachelor's degree from Lesley University, followed by a master's degree from Tulane University in 1983. For more than two decades, she has dedicated her career to education, guiding and mentoring students at every level and helping them build bright, successful futures.

Councilmember Berger is a lifelong public servant and champion for her community. She has led at both the local and national levels through her work with the New York State United Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers. A dedicated advocate for individuals with special needs, she also runs a local Challenger Baseball program that empowers children and adults with disabilities to play and thrive. In 2017, she was elected to the Amherst Town Board and has dutifully served for nearly a decade. During her tenure, Councilmember Berger was appointed Deputy Supervisor, playing a vital role in the town's operations and acting as a liaison between the Town and Amherst residents.

As we acknowledge the incredible service of Councilmember Jacqueline Berger, let us recognize her dedicated career as a public servant and her service to the Town of Amherst, providing a safe space for all to be seen and heard. Councilmember Berger's leadership is a masterclass, and her service will be seen, felt, and heard for generations to come, and we are all the better for it.

RECOGNIZING THE RECIPIENTS OF FLORIDA'S 16TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT VETERAN COMMENDA- TION

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a group of veterans for their military and community service.

Our veterans have sacrificed much in the defense of our Nation. Many of them retired their uniforms but continue their service by helping others in their community.

Four years ago, I established the 16th District Congressional Veteran Commendation to recognize the heroic wartime sacrifices and admirable peacetime community involvement of my constituents. These are exceptional Americans. I appreciate the opportunity to honor them for their service to the Nation and community.

An independent panel reviewed several nominations and chose the following nineteen veterans for their wartime and post-military service. I include in the RECORD their names:

Nelson Betancourt of Valrico who served in the U.S. Army outside of war time.

Benny Blackshire of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War.

Jeffery Camp of Parrish who served in the U.S. Army and Army National Guard during the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars.

Jack Carter of Lakewood Ranch who served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Vietnam and Gulf Wars.

Charles Conover, Jr. of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Army outside of war time.

Ronald Cousineau of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Air Force outside of war time.

Emily Farkas of Brandon who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars.

Ferris Garrett, Jr. of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War.

William Greer of Wimauma who served in the U.S. Air Force outside of war time.

Brian Hammer of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Army during the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars.

Nathaniel Hawthorne of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Navy during the Iraq War.

Roberta Jordan of Riverview who served in the U.S. Army outside of war time.

Robert Lucas, II of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Army outside of war time.

Danny Melton of Riverview who served in the U.S. Marine Corps outside of war time.

MaryAnn Rowe of Sun City Center who served in the Michigan Army National Guard during the Iraq War.

Richard Steinestel of Valrico who served in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War.

Roland Tiso, Jr. of Valrico who served in the U.S. Army during the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars.

Paul Wheat, Jr. of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War.

Edward Wudarsky, Jr. of Sun City Center who served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War.

• 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.

CONGRATULATING DR. SHEILA QUIRK-BAILEY ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Dr. Sheila Quirk-Bailey, President of Illinois Central College, for her outstanding leadership and over three decades of dedicated service to higher education. Since becoming president in 2016, Dr. Quirk-Bailey has guided Illinois Central College through a period of significant progress focused on student success, equity, and workforce development.

Under her leadership, Illinois Central College achieved five consecutive semesters of enrollment growth, improved graduation and retention rates, and reduced developmental education placements by sixty-six percent while maintaining strong student outcomes. Dr. Quirk-Bailey led the creation of nationally recognized workforce programs including the Workforce Empowerment Initiative, the Information Technology Workforce Accelerator, and the first prison education program in the Nation funded by federal Pell grants. The Workforce Empowerment Initiative alone has helped lift more than 1,200 individuals out of poverty, with participants seeing an average increase of nearly thirty-three thousand dollars in yearly earnings.

Dr. Quirk-Bailey also laid a strong foundation for ICC's next decade of growth. Through the College's strategic plan, she advanced a year-round eight-week scheduling process, expanded micro and stackable credential pathways, supported the development of boot camps and competency-based education models, and guided the implementation of a new enterprise resource planning platform to modernize operations and meet future workforce demands.

Central Illinois is fortunate to have had a leader whose vision, professionalism, and dedication to expanding educational opportunity, have strengthened our region for many years. Dr. Quirk-Bailey's unwavering commitment to student success and workforce advancement is truly inspiring, and her retirement marks the closure of a remarkable career devoted to improving lives through education. I am honored to recognize her for her extraordinary service and congratulate her on her well-earned retirement. I wish Dr. Quirk-Bailey and her loved ones the very best in the years ahead.

CELEBRATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS, LOCAL 17

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 125th anniversary of the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 17. For over a century, these skilled workers have ensured the safe and efficient operation of the machinery that powers our re-

gion's progress. Their expertise keeps Western New York's vital projects running—projects that our communities rely on every single day.

As the very embodiment of American blue-collar grit and skill, Local 17 represents the best of who we are. With over two thousand members, Local 17 continues to strengthen our workforce through apprenticeship programs, training programs, and a focus on continuous education. The renaissance of Western New York wouldn't be possible without Local 17's hard work.

Local 17 is led by President Josh Williams and Business Manager William Fekete. The union also operates a training school located in Lake View, New York, under the direction of Vice President James Smolinski, Jr., helping to educate the next generation of operating engineers in the safe usage of their equipment and allowing members to hone their skills.

Mr. Speaker, as we mark the 125th anniversary of the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 17, we celebrate its lasting impact on Western New York. Local 17 exemplifies the best of organized labor and demonstrates that when we invest in our workers, we invest in the success of our entire region.

HONORING MONIQUE KOLTERMAN FOR HER DEDICATED SERVICE TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION

HON. LISA C. MCCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mrs. MCCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Monique Kolterman, an exemplary educator whose unwavering devotion to Catholic education in the Diocese of Arlington has left a profound and lasting impact on countless students, families, and colleagues.

Monique began her service to the diocese in 2009 at Nativity Catholic School in Burke, Virginia, where she worked as an Instructional Aide. From her first days in the classroom, it was clear that she possessed a rare gift: the ability to nurture both the intellect and spirit. Her efforts helped foster a culture of academic excellence and Christ-centered formation, and she served the Nativity community with distinction until 2012.

In August 2015, Monique brought her passion and talents to St. Veronica Catholic School, joining the faculty as an Instructional Assistant for second grade. Her exceptional work, leadership, and rapport with students quickly earned her additional responsibility, and in 2019, she rose to become one of the school's lead fifth-grade teachers. Her influence extended beyond the classroom, most notably in the spring of 2023, when she enriched the school community by leading the after-school Chess Club, offering students a new outlet for strategic thinking and personal growth.

Monique's qualifications reflect not only her expertise but also her deep commitment to the vocation of teaching. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Education and is certified by the Virginia Catholic Education Association through the Diocese of Arlington-credentials that underscore her professional excellence and dedication to lifelong learning.

Her career in Catholic education, however, reaches even further back. Before joining the

Diocese of Arlington, Monique served in a variety of instructional roles across Ohio, including as a Social Studies Teacher, Middle School English Teacher, CD Teacher and Eucharistic Minister, French Long-Term Substitute Teacher, and Learning Resource Assistant. In each role, she exemplified the same hallmarks that define her today: unwavering integrity, intellectual rigor, and a heartfelt commitment to forming young people in knowledge, character, and faith.

Mr. Speaker, today we celebrate Monique Kolterman not only for her years of devoted service but for the extraordinary example she sets. She is a teacher who inspires, a mentor who uplifts, and a servant-leader whose quiet strength has shaped the lives of all who have been blessed to know her. Her contributions to Catholic education will continue to bear fruit for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, we extend our deepest gratitude to Monique—for the inspiration she provides, the steadfast leadership she has shown through trying times, and the enduring mark she leaves on the hearts and minds of so many.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DUSTY JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, due to flight delays as a result of winter weather, I missed Monday evening votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 306, and YEA on Roll Call No. 307.

CELEBRATING 15TH PASTORAL ANNIVERSARY OF PASTOR CRAIG PRIDGEN

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the remarkable leadership and service of Pastor Craig Pridgen as we honor his 15th Pastoral Anniversary at True Bethel Baptist Church. Pastor Pridgen's influence extends far beyond the walls of the church, making a lasting impact on the lives of those in need.

As a proud Western New York native, Pastor Pridgen was raised with the strong support of his family from the very beginning, helping to shape him into a natural leader in all aspects of his life. He excelled academically, graduating from the Buffalo Academy for Visual and Performing Arts before earning his Associate's degree in Business Administration from Medaille University; and later furthering his education, obtaining his Bachelor's degree in Leadership Studies from Regent University.

More than two decades ago with a unanimous decision amongst his peers, Pastor Pridgen was granted his license to preach. In 2010, Pastor Pridgen was chosen to be the spiritual leader of True Bethel Baptist Church's Niagara Falls, New York congregation, guided by the teachings and carrying the voice and