

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

vision of his father, Pastor Darius Pridgen. As a licensed and ordained minister of the Gospel, Pastor Pridgen embodies the belief that we are all called to be servants of the Lord. His passion for service resonates throughout the Western New York, and his leadership inspires parishioners and visitors of True Bethel Baptist Church to grow in faith and unity.

Pastor Pridgen is supported by his beloved wife, the Honorable Judge JaHarr Pridgen. Together, they have formed a family grounded in faith with the addition of their two blessed children: Jordin and Journey. Their marriage exemplifies the strength found in a family that prays and worships together. Pastor Pridgen has made a priority of reaching out to his community, serving as a mentor and advocate for youth, adults, and our most vulnerable community members through his role as a Senior Community Advisor and Chaplain at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center.

As we celebrate a decade and a half of Pastor Pridgen's unwavering dedication, let us recognize the countless lives he has touched and the profound impact he has made at True Bethel Baptist Church and beyond. I congratulate Pastor Pridgen on this significant milestone. His service is a blessing, and we look forward to many more years of his inspired leadership.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JEFFERSON SHREVE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mr. SHREVE. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 305, H. Con. Res. 58.

RECOGNIZING THE ELEVEN NEW-EST EAGLE SCOUTS FROM TROOP 407

HON. SUSIE LEE

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Ms. LEE of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the tremendous achievement of eleven young men from Troop 407 in Las Vegas who will receive their Eagle Scout Awards simultaneously on December 6, 2025. This event marks only the second time nationally, and the first in Las Vegas, that a troop has achieved such a feat.

These young men are setting the example of what Scouts and young people can achieve. It is not easy to earn the prestigious rank of Eagle Scout—one must persevere through years of hard work, demonstrate strong leadership, and dedicate countless hours of service to others.

The Scout Motto is "Be Prepared" and becoming an Eagle Scout is one of the best ways for a young person to prepare for a life of service and leadership in their community. Las Vegas is proud to have raised these boys into young leaders, and we are looking forward to seeing what all eleven of them become in the years ahead.

I commend the hard work, dedication, and achievement of Jacob Bennett, Cannon Cas-

tor, Ethan Dastrup, Christian Earl, Jackson Hedin, Nixon Hunt, Jack Hyer, Issac Koval, Seth Leedom, Michael Norton, and Luke Robinson. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing their achievement.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE BRIAN KULPA

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 Honorable Brian Kulpa, Supervisor of the Town of Amherst, and a man whose influence can be seen and felt throughout the Western New York community by colleagues and community members alike.

As a Western New York native, Supervisor Kulpa graduated from St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute and later obtained his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning from SUNY Buffalo. Supervisor Kulpa has more than a quarter-century of experience as an architect and urban planner, previously serving as a senior associate, architect, and planner at a local Western New York firm. Supervisor Kulpa later established his own company, Waves Architecture and Engineering, of which he serves as Principal Architect.

Supervisor Kulpa's career has been a testament to his love for our community. Supervisor Kulpa served as Mayor of the Village of Williamsville from 2012 through the end of 2017, and played a vital role in the village's day-to-day operations, acting as a liaison between the Village of Williamsville and residents. Due to Kulpa's tenacity and vision, the Village of Williamsville was awarded \$11 million in state and federal funding to focus on enhancements of the Main Street Corridor. This investment led to community and infrastructure projects that will be enjoyed by residents and visitors for decades to come.

In 2017, Kulpa was elected Amherst Town Supervisor, where he has helped transform the Town of Amherst into a center of economic prosperity. Supervisor Kulpa has prioritized investments in neighborhood revitalization projects, economic development, parks and recreation, and transportation and infrastructure. With a focus on leveraging existing spaces within the town, Supervisor Kulpa has worked to make the town a vibrant community with a thriving economy.

As we acknowledge the incredible service of the Honorable Brian Kulpa, let us recognize his dedicated career as a public servant to the Village of Williamsville and the Town of Amherst. Supervisor Kulpa's leadership is truly exemplary, and the impact of his service will be seen, felt, and heard for generations to come, leaving our community stronger and better.

HONORING MARCUS D. YOUNG AND H.F. YOUNG TRANSPORTATION, INC.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Marcus D. Young, whose vision, perseverance, and family legacy have transformed H.F. Young Transportation, Inc. into a leading provider of non-emergency medical transportation across the southern United States.

Fifteen years ago, Mr. Young and his wife, Mrs. Toni Wright-Young, founded the company in honor of his grandfather, Harry Young, Sr. What began as a tribute has grown into one of the largest and most trusted non-emergency medical transportation providers in Mississippi, with operations extending into Alabama, Louisiana, and Arkansas.

Under Mr. Young's leadership, H.F. Young Transportation has become known for its reliability, professionalism, and deep commitment to serving vulnerable populations. The company provides safe and accessible transportation for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and others in need of medical care. With a fleet of specialized vehicles and a dedicated staff trained in safety and compassion, the company saves thousands of clients each year—offering both logistical excellence and a personal touch rooted in community care.

Although its reach spans multiple states, H.F. Young Transportation remains deeply connected to Yazoo City, Mississippi, where Mr. Young's family and values were shaped. He continues to give back to his community while expanding the company's services and exploring new innovations to improve healthcare access and mobility across the region.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Marcus D. Young for his leadership, his dedication to service, and his remarkable success in building H.F. Young Transportation, Inc. into both a thriving business and a vital community resource.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF HAZEL CHANDLER

HON. GREG STANTON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember Hazel Chandler, a tireless advocate for public health and the environment, who passed away last month at the age of 80.

For nearly six decades, Hazel devoted her life to cleaner air, a safer climate, and a healthier future for generations she would never meet. Hazel's work began long before climate change was a household term. Growing up during the first wave of modern environmental awareness, she saw firsthand how polluted air and water harmed communities and fueled her own health struggles. When she moved to Arizona in the late 1970s, she had already spent years organizing for clean air initiatives. In Phoenix, she brought that passion into public service. At the Arizona Department of Health Services, she rose to lead