

and Master of Theology in Church and Community from the Missouri School of Religion, a Master's in American Church History from the American Baptist Seminary of the West, and a Doctor of Ministry from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dr. Smith became the senior pastor at Allen Temple Baptist Church in 1971. In that position, he expanded the church's membership from 500 to 4,500. He placed a particular emphasis on ministering to underserved communities, especially those in East Oakland. His ministry always had a firm foundation in advocacy and social justice. Dr. Smith used his voice and his pulpit to uplift the poor, the downtrodden, and the left behind, bringing the concerns of his congregation to the attention of local leaders and fighting for positive change.

But Dr. Smith was not only a giant in the City of Oakland. His powerful oratory and spiritual leadership was recognized across the country and around the world. Dr. Smith was elected president of the Progressive Baptist State Convention of California in 1979, and in 1986 he became president of the Progressive National Baptist Convention. In 1989, he delivered powerful testimony before the United Nations, denouncing the evils of Apartheid South Africa. He was twice recognized by *Ebony* magazine as one of the "Most Influential Black Americans" and was named one of its "15 Greatest Black Preachers." He lectured at Cambridge, Oxford, and Baylor University and was professor emeritus of preaching and church ministries at the Berkeley School of Theology. Throughout his distinguished career, he wrote 16 books.

Dr. Smith was a friend and guide to all those he met, no matter their position. He took time to listen and speak to all those who sought his guidance, always abiding by one of his personal mottos: "I wish I could make it plain." He made no efforts to attract renown and yet became one of the most influential and well-known Black pastors and activists of his generation.

Dr. Smith is survived by his beloved wife, Reverend Bernestine Farley, his five children, Amy, James, Jr., Ronald Craig, Shri, and Anthony, as well as his fourteen grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren.

Dr. Smith was a trail blazer and personal inspiration. I am deeply grateful for his decades of service to my community. His loss is felt profoundly by the many people whose lives he touched.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERT
"BOB" FOSTER

HON. TED LIEU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Mr. LIEU. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life of Robert "Bob" Foster, a great public servant who passed away on November 30, 2025. Bob had a distinguished career in public service holding roles as a Senior California State Legislative Aide, a State University Official, and later as Mayor of Long Beach, California.

Bob was born in 1947 in Brooklyn, New York, and after being taught by his father, Ben, he took up a trade installing carpets in

New York City. He was a hard worker who learned to work fast installing carpets in homes in the city, working alongside his father. Bob made the trek across the country to attend San Jose State University and through college he continued working in the flooring business to support his education.

After graduating in 1969, Bob was hired by the California State Senate where he worked on the Public Utilities, Transit, and Energy Committee. He took to the role so quickly that he was promoted to Chief of Staff of the Committee a year later. During his time working in the State Senate, Bob helped develop the first statewide energy standards, which would eventually create the California Energy Commission. After years in the legislature, Foster went to work at Southern California Edison, a utility company, eventually rising to the role of President of the Company in 2002.

Given his experience as a state university graduate and policy leader, Bob was appointed by former Governor Pete Wilson to serve as a member of the California State University Board of Trustees. While serving as a trustee, Bob taught briefly in the Department of Political Science at his alma mater, San Jose State. He used his experience as a policy leader and energy policy expert to help mentor students in his time teaching, passing on his knowledge just as his father did for him.

In 2006, Bob was elected as Mayor of the City of Long Beach and led the city through the tumult of the Great Recession. During that time, Mayor Foster helped the city tackle a budget deficit, helped the city reduce crime and tackled traffic and pollution challenges for the major city. Bob helped worked with the City of Long Beach and Habitat for Humanity on the Mayor's Build House, a home that was given to a low-income family in the city. Later, the city would rename its Civic Chambers in honor of Mayor Foster, a testament to the legacy of service he left serving Long Beach residents.

Though he retired from public service, Bob and his family never stopped doing what they could to serve those in need. Bob opened a program teaching architecture, construction and engineering skills at the ACE Academy at Jordan High School. He and his wife also created the James Foster Endowed Scholarship at Long Beach State University to honor their son and help students in need. Bob's goal was always to help teach and mentor those coming up in the world and to help those in need.

Bob is survived by his wife, Nancy, one of his two sons and three grandchildren. May his legacy of service continue to inspire the communities that he served.

HONORING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY
OF LAURA SPADACCINO

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a remarkable milestone in the life of a truly beloved member of our community, Mrs. Laura Spadaccino of Bristol Borough, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who this month joyfully celebrates her 100th birthday.

Born on December 15, 1925, to Italian immigrant parents, Salvatore and Josephine

Tardino, Laura entered this world during the hardships of the Great Depression. From the very beginning, her life has been a testament to resilience, family, and the enduring American spirit. Bristol Borough has always been her home with the borough's heart, its history, and its people woven into the story of her extraordinary life.

In 1958, Laura married the love of her life, Almerindo "Al" Spadaccino. Together, they shared 43 beautiful years of marriage until his passing in 2001. They raised three wonderful children, Joann, Joyce, and Bob. Laura's family has continued to grow, now blessed with eight grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren, with another soon to arrive. Each generation carries forward her strength, her traditions, and above all, her boundless love.

Laura's joy has always been found in relationships. Especially with her two lifelong friends, Gloria Fink and Mary Piarro. Their sisterhood spanned more than nine decades, filled with weekly card games, spontaneous trips to the casino, and endless shared laughter. Their friendship is a shining example of loyalty, joy, and enduring connection.

A devout Catholic, Laura has been a pillar of St. Ann's Church, faithfully participating in the annual summer festival and supporting parish life in countless ways. She also served her country during World War II while working at Kaiser-Fleetwings Corporation. She was doing her part to support our service members overseas fighting the Axis Power to free Europe. Yet many in Bristol Borough remember her best from her years working at her brother's restaurant, Tardino's. After his passing, she and her friends Betty Napoli and Lois Bartol carried on his legacy, running the beloved local eatery they named "The Golden Girls".

What truly sets Laura apart is her youthful spirit. Age has never defined her. Even in later years, she could be found joyfully playing goalie, remarkably, still in her high heels during a game of street hockey with her grandchildren or hopping on the back of a quad for a ride filled with laughter and adventure. Her great-grandchildren treasure every moment with her, and her home remains a place where stories, food, and love are always flowing.

Today, Laura is blessed. Not only with a large and loving family but with neighbors and friends who care deeply for her. The richness of her life is found in the relationships she has nurtured, and in the joy she so generously shares with everyone around her.

Mr. Speaker, the secret to Laura's longevity may very well be simple: love, laughter, and a life grounded in gratitude.

It is my profound honor to recognize and celebrate this extraordinary woman, whose journey began in poverty but has grown into a legacy rich in warmth, joy, and community.

Happy 100th Birthday to Laura. On behalf of the United States House of Representatives and the 1st Congressional District of Pennsylvania, I want her to know that she is cherished, appreciated, and deeply loved.

May God continue to bless her in the years ahead.

RECOGNIZING VICTOR ODERMAT

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Victor Odermat for his many years of dedication to our country, both through his military service and active support for the Puget Sound military community through Brown Bear Car Wash.

Victor valiantly served in the United States Marine Corps until the mid-1950's, and his dedication to service continued long after his active military duty. Upon graduating from Lakeside High School, Victor entered the University of Washington's NROTC program and would go on to serve in the United States Marine Corps until the mid-1950's. After leaving the Marines, Victor founded Brown Bear Car Wash, which would become a steadfast supporter of the military community. He displayed exemplary work ethic and was widely known for his commitment to "taking care of the customer."

Victor exemplified service and dedication to the military community, he carried this same unceasing devotion to serving those around him. Brown Bear Car Wash backs National Guard and Reserve troops through Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, offering free car washes to veterans on every Veterans Day and donating a portion of proceeds to the Puget Sound Honor Flight. Brown Bear Car Wash has donated over \$71,000 to the Puget Sound Honor Flight and is a vital partner to Cathay Post No. 186, helping raise funds for veteran services. Beyond supporting the post, Brown Bear contributes to organizations like the USO, Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation, and Boy Scouts of America, reflecting a deep commitment to the Puget Sound community. Victor has left a resounding impact on all those around him and was a true leader of the communities he was part of.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Victor Odermat for a lifetime of service to the United States of America and to his community. I am deeply grateful for his important efforts towards protecting our country and his outstanding contributions to the Puget Sound community. His legacy will not be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING MANASSAS REGIONAL AIRPORT'S AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

HON. SUHAS SUBRAMANYAM

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the extraordinary Air Traffic Controllers of Manassas Regional Airport. Despite challenging circumstances during the 2025 federal government shutdown, the dedicated Manassas Tower workforce worked arduously to ensure seamless airport operations. Manassas Tower is one of few towers to have zero staffing triggers throughout the shutdown, a testament to the unwavering commitment and efforts of its employees.

The Manassas Tower is a critical part of regional air traffic. As the largest regional airport

in Virginia and ranked in the top 25 percent of busiest general aviation airports, it oversaw over 100,000 flights in 2024. In addition to prioritizing the safety of all flights moving through the airport, Manassas Tower is committed to providing mentorship and professional development for all its staff. Their impeccable training for controllers has equipped several employees with the skills and experiences to transition to major airport facilities.

Manassas Tower has historically prevailed against difficult circumstances. It has faced critical infrastructure issues yet maintained its role as a leader in air traffic control. As they prepare for commercial flights in 2026, they will continue to be a role model for perseverance and leading with purpose.

I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing and commemorating the efforts of the Manassas Air Traffic Control Tower team.

HONORING MARKENZY LAPOINTE

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career and inspiring journey of Markenzyl Lapointe, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida. Appointed by President Joseph Biden and confirmed by the U.S. Senate in December of 2022, Mr. Lapointe led an office of nearly 500 attorneys and support professionals dedicated to investigating and prosecuting federal crimes in South Florida and litigating civil matters in which the United States has an interest. Mr. Lapointe served in this capacity until he ended his term with the outgoing Biden Administration. His leadership in this pivotal role serves as a testament to his unwavering commitment to justice and public service.

Mr. Lapointe's remarkable legal career began with the Florida Supreme Court, where he served as a law clerk to the Honorable Harry Lee Anstead from 1999 to 2001. He subsequently joined the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, handling federal criminal matters ranging from narcotics and firearms offenses to bank and mortgage fraud. His tenure in private practice included over a decade at Boies Schiller Flexner LLP, where he rose from litigation associate to partner before joining Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP.

Mr. Lapointe served as a partner at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP in Miami, where he handled complex commercial disputes, high-exposure product liability cases, professional malpractice matters, and criminal investigations. As co-chair of the firm's Advancement of Diverse Attorneys Committee, he demonstrated a steadfast dedication to promoting the retention and advancement of attorneys from various backgrounds, exemplifying his commitment to equity and inclusion within the legal profession.

Throughout his career, Mr. Lapointe has also demonstrated an exceptional commitment to pro bono service. He has received numerous accolades for his advocacy, including the Legal Aid/Put Something Back Pro Bono Award in Child Advocacy and the Daily Business Review's Most Effective Lawyer Award for Pro Bono in Family Law.

A proud alumnus of Florida State University, Mr. Lapointe earned both his law degree from the College of Law and his degree in finance from the College of Business. He also attended Miami Dade College, reflecting his deep ties to the South Florida community.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Mr. Lapointe's personal story is a profound source of inspiration. Born in Haiti, he immigrated to the United States as a teenager and settled in Miami's Liberty City neighborhood. A graduate of Edison High School, Mr. Lapointe went on to serve his country as a U.S. Marine during the Gulf War. Today, he is not only a distinguished legal professional but also a trailblazer as the first Haitian-born American to serve as U.S. Attorney.

Mr. Speaker, please join me as I recognize Markenzyl Lapointe. He embodies the values of perseverance, service, and excellence. His journey from Liberty City to leading one of the most significant U.S. Attorney's Offices in the Nation is a testament to the boundless opportunities our country provides. I extend my heartfelt congratulations and gratitude to Mr. Lapointe for his service to our Nation and his dedication to the pursuit of justice.

HONORING THE DEUTSCHER CLUB ON ITS 90TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Mr. KEAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 90th anniversary of The Deutscher Club in Clark, New Jersey. On September 30, 1935, a group of local men came together to establish an organization dedicated to celebrating and preserving their German heritage and ancestral roots. From this commitment on, this club has grown to be the largest German club in New Jersey. The club's first gathering took place in the welcoming walls of Nick Grunwald's delicatessen in Rahway, New Jersey. Shortly after this, the first official meeting was held at the Grevens Hotel. At this meeting Karl Krumer was elected as the organization's first president and the name "Deutscher Club of Rahway" was formally adopted. By the 1950's the club continued to grow. In response, the Deutscher Club purchased a farmhouse sitting on acres of beautiful land. With their dedication and outstanding effort by the members, the humble "Ole House" was turned into a beautiful and expansive Club House, reflecting the club's impressive progression and commitment to the German heritage. In 1955, The Ladies Division was established and reactivated again in 1979. Throughout the years, the ladies of this division have played a vital role in emphasizing the club's culture by organizing card parties, fashion shows and other cultural events. To advance the German Culture and education, the club provides financial support to multiple organizations, schools and other cultural institutions. The Deutscher Club will continue to be an "Oasis for German-Americans in New Jersey." I am deeply proud of the achievements of this club and its members. Mr. Speaker as The Deutscher Club celebrates their 90th anniversary of German-American cultural and communal excellence, I am pleased to commend all members of The Deutscher Club for being