

RECOGNIZING RETIRING TACOMA
MAYOR VICTORIA WOODARDS
FOR HER YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. MARILYN STRICKLAND

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2025

Ms. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mayor Victoria Woodards, who is retiring as Tacoma, Washington's 39th Mayor.

A graduate of Lincoln High School, she proudly served her country in the U.S. Army, thinking she would see the world, and ended up right back home at Fort Lewis. She also pursued a long career in public service as a parks commissioner, as a city councilmember, and as mayor of Tacoma.

I congratulate Victoria on an exemplary and distinguished career of more than 15 years serving the people of Tacoma. Under her leadership, the city launched the Equity and Empowerment Initiative, which led to the creation of our Office of Equity and Human Rights. The city implemented key police reforms, including updates to the use-of-force standards. She established the city of Tacoma's first Youth Commission, giving high school students a chance to learn how government works. She passed Home in Tacoma, which expanded key and necessary housing opportunities across the entire city. She also raised our profile nationally by serving as president of the National League of Cities, promoting the platform of people, partnership, and possibilities. She launched the Growing Resilience in Tacoma, otherwise known as GRIT, one of the first guaranteed income pilots in the entire Nation to address systemic poverty. She supported the creation of Maritime 253, which is a skills training center in partnership with Tacoma Public Schools and the Port of Tacoma.

Throughout her career, Mayor Woodards has broken barriers, championed equity and justice for all, and has been instrumental in ensuring that every voice in our community is heard. I thank Mayor Woodards for her selfless service to the City of Destiny, Tacoma, Washington, and the Nation.

PROMOTING EFFICIENT REVIEW
FOR MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE
TODAY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 11, 2025

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of my amendment to H.R. 3898, the PERMIT Act, and in opposition to the underlying bill.

For the last fifty years, the Clean Water Act has provided the federal government with the means to hold polluters accountable for contaminating our Nation's wetlands, rivers, lakes, and sources of drinking water. The Clean Water Act, in many cases, has been the sole reason why decades of pollution threatening the health of our communities has been reversed and why countless bodies of water throughout the country are now being preserved for future generations. The PERMIT

Act will reverse progress and give polluters the ability to, once again, contaminate our waters by minimizing many of the critical protections in the Clean Water Act. This legislation establishes blanket Clean Water Act exemptions for toxic and cancer-causing chemicals stemming from pesticide use, agriculture, and wildfire management. This legislation also shields polluters from liability for pollutants that they do not disclose on their permit applications, even if they know that their operations result in the introduction of these pollutants.

In Southeastern Virginia, one of our region's most critical resources is the Chesapeake Bay. The Bay provides our local economy with many opportunities in recreation, business, education, and tourism. Throughout the watershed, the Bay brings in nearly \$14.3 billion in annual revenue and supports nearly one million jobs. The federal government and the states in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed recognize that our communities rely on the health of the Bay and signed the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement to regulate pollutants and implement standards like the Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL. It is extremely concerning that the PERMIT Act includes language specifically targeting the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement's TMDL by weakening the federal government's role in its implementation. My amendment strikes this language from the bill. The long-standing collaboration between the federal government and the states should not be diminished.

I would like to thank the twelve members who cosponsored my amendment to strike this language. Because this amendment is not included and because of the various provisions in the underlying bill that endanger the protection of our Nation's waters, I oppose passage of this legislation.

CELEBRATING ARCHBISHOP MURPHY
HIGH SCHOOL'S 2025 FOOTBALL
STATE TITLE

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2025

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with my colleague, Congresswoman SUZAN DELBENE, to congratulate the Archbishop Murphy High School football team on their first state title since 2016. The team earned the opportunity to play Tumwater in the 2A state championship game at Husky Stadium on December 6, 2025, led by their head coach Joe Cronin.

We would also like to extend our congratulations to Archbishop Murphy senior receiver Henry Gabalis for signing to the University of Arizona, offensive lineman Hakiem Smalls for signing to Boise State University, and tight end Jack Sievers for signing to the University of Wisconsin—Madison. These students, as well as their entire team, should be proud of their performance this season.

Mr. Speaker, we ask our colleagues to join us in celebrating the achievements of the Archbishop Murphy High School football team for their hard work and championship win. Go Wildcats.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF PSYKO
STEVE PRESENTS

HON. GREG STANTON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2025

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Psyko Steve Presents, a homegrown Arizona company that is celebrating their 25-year anniversary next week. Psyko Steve Presents shapes our state's modern music culture. Psyko Steve Presents brings artists, audiences, and communities together and strengthens the creative fabric that makes Phoenix such a vibrant place to live.

Founded in 2000 by Steve Chilton, known throughout the Valley as "Psyko Steve," the company began with small DIY shows booked while he was still in high school and at Arizona State University. What started as a hobby quickly became a driving force in reviving live music in Phoenix at a time when the local scene needed new energy. Steve helps emerging musicians find their footing, many of whom later grew into nationally recognized acts. Today, Psyko Steve Presents produces more than 700 concerts annually across venues of every size, from intimate performances at The Rebel Lounge to major events at The Van Buren, the Marquee Theatre, the Arizona Financial Theatre, and festivals including M3F, ZONA Music Festival, and 8123 Fest.

Steve is more than a promoter. He is also advocates for artists and independent venues across the U.S. As a co-founder and early leader of the National Independent Venue Association, he helped organize the grassroots #SaveOurStages campaign during the Covid-19 pandemic. The campaign led Congress to pass the Save Our Stages Act and create the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program, which kept local venues afloat in their darkest hour. His work demonstrated how central live music is to the economic and cultural vitality of communities across America.

Psyko Steve Presents has grown a great deal over the past 25 years, but its mission has remained constant: support local artists and give Arizonans access to unforgettable live music experiences.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the 25th anniversary of Psyko Steve Presents and congratulating Steve Chilton and his team. Their commitment to creativity, community, and independent music has enriched our state, and we look forward to many more years of music ahead.

HONORING JUDY MOHR PETERSON

HON. JILL N. TOKUDA

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2025

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary service of Dr. Judy Mohr Peterson, who has dedicated her career to strengthening Medicaid and expanding access to high-quality health care for the people of Hawaii.

I first had the opportunity to work with Judy years ago at the state level in Hawaii, where we often found ourselves facing some of the toughest policy challenges that states encounter, balancing limited resources with the real

health needs of families, seniors, keiki, and people with complex medical conditions. Through many difficult conversations and complex decisions, Judy brought not only deep expertise but also a profound commitment to equity and aloha for people and communities across our islands.

As Administrator of Hawaii's Med-QUEST Division, Judy demonstrated exceptional leadership in advancing innovative strategies that stretched every dollar of Medicaid to serve our most vulnerable residents. Under her guidance, Hawaii pursued expanded benefits and greater flexibility within federal Medicaid authorities, ensuring that the program could respond more fully to the holistic needs of those it serves. This included securing extension and expansion of Hawaii's Section 1115 Medicaid demonstration, strengthening coverage for health-related social needs, supporting continuity of coverage and care, and enhancing services for residents transitioning from incarceration or foster care to community living.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Judy's experience, leadership, and calm demeanor were indispensable. She mobilized Med-QUEST to implement emergency flexibilities overnight, protected continuous coverage for hundreds of thousands of Hawaii residents, and worked closely with providers to stabilize the health care system at a time when uncertainty and fear were widespread. Her steady guidance ensured that vulnerable families did not lose access to care, that providers were supported in maintaining essential services, and that the state swiftly responded to emerging public health needs.

Recognizing that health extends beyond clinical care, Judy also played a key role in expanding community-based services. Under her leadership, Hawaii became the first state in the Nation to secure approval to cover community-based palliative care through Medicaid, allowing individuals with serious illness to receive compassionate, symptom-relieving care outside of hospital settings.

These innovations on their own are challenging, and Judy did these while facing significant public health emergencies and disasters, from the pandemic to the Maui fires. By embracing federal flexibilities such as Section 1135 waivers—she ensured that care continued uninterrupted for those most at risk. Her team's work earned national recognition from the National Association of Medicaid Directors for its rapid response and profound community impact.

More recently, as the Nation debated major changes in federal Medicaid policy, including the projected significant cuts and eligibility shifts anticipated under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, Judy was a critical voice in helping us understand and prepare for the impacts to medically vulnerable communities across Hawaii. She clearly articulated how new work requirements and more frequent eligibility checks will threaten continued coverage for hundreds of thousands of people in Hawaii, emphasizing the administrative burdens and risk of coverage loss, especially among working families and vulnerable populations. Throughout these transitions, Judy also worked to support providers in transforming care delivery to a more value-oriented model that rewards quality and outcomes, reinvesting in systems and programs that support Hawaii's most vulnerable residents and providers alike. Her approach always kept people at the

center, ensuring that even as systems evolve, coverage, access, and dignity are preserved for those who need care most.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my biggest "mahalo" and sincerest "congratulations" to Judy Mohr Peterson on her years of distinguished service as Hawaii's Medicaid Director and Med-QUEST Division Administrator. Throughout her tenure, she has shown visionary leadership, unwavering compassion, and a tireless commitment to improving health outcomes for children, families, kupuna, and communities across Hawaii. Her work has touched the lives of approximately one-third of our state's residents, and her legacy of innovation and advocacy will continue to benefit all of Hawaii for years to come.

Mahalo to Judy for her exemplary public service and for her enduring dedication to ensuring that Medicaid serves not just as a payer of services, but as a lifeline to health, equity, and opportunity.

RECOGNIZING THE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL FAMILY CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA

HON. MIKE HARIDOPOLOS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2025

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, December 20, 2025, families from across Brevard County will come together at Fred Poppe Regional Park in Palm Bay, Florida, to celebrate the Seventeenth Annual Family Christmas Extravaganza—an event that embodies the very best of our community during the Christmas season.

This annual tradition is made possible through the collaboration of faith-based organizations, including The House Church, Eastwind Pentecostal Church, Jornada al Cielo, Wings of Grace Ministries, and CITA Rescue Mission, all of whom have united to serve families and spread hope, generosity, and goodwill.

Working alongside dedicated community and business partners, including the City of Palm Bay Parks & Recreation, Thrifty Specialty Produce, Chick-Fil-A, Cocina Cafe, Health First Hospital, Gator Automotive, Frog Bones-Family Shooting Center, Z88.3FM, All Digital All Day, Grifols Plasma Distribution Center, Toys for Tots North and South Area, Al Dia Today Newspaper, Martin's Famous Potato Rolls, and Premiere Oaks 10 Cinema, the mission of this event is simple but powerful: to create a welcoming place where families can celebrate Christmas, give back, and support one another.

More than sixty local businesses and organizations have stepped up with donations of toys, food, gift certificates, equipment, and financial support. The Extravaganza will also feature musicians and artists such as Carl Lewis & Intensity Band, Host Eddie Anthony as Eddie Frost, Co-Host Aleshka Ortiz as Aleshka Bell, along with Jolly Jo Jo, Snowflake Lilly, and Johan the Elf CEO (Chief Elf Officer), and Corey Sprengle with S & S Sound.

As Senior Pastor Ken Delgado of The House at Palm Bay so eloquently put it, at a time when our Nation often feels divided, "[. . .] it is exciting to see the City of Palm

Bay, along with the city's businesses and the citizens, create an event where love, joy, and peace are expressed."

Mr. Speaker, the spirit of the holidays is about generosity, service, and time spent with loved ones. The Family Christmas Extravaganza reflects those values and highlights what is possible when a community comes together in the service of others. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and commending the volunteers, faith leaders, businesses, and community partners who have worked tirelessly to make the Seventeenth Annual Family Christmas Extravaganza a success and to spread the true spirit of Christmas throughout Brevard County.

RECOGNIZING THE TULARE COUNTY COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES, CASA

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2025

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Tulare County Court Appointed Special Advocates on their 40-year anniversary.

The Tulare County Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) provides support to the juvenile court and its dependent children, who are innocent victims of abuse and neglect. CASA was established in 1977 to combat misrepresentation of these victims and Tulare County CASA was created in 1984 by concerned members of the community. These strong advocates step into the court room on behalf of victimized children to help ensure their cases go smoothly and they can get on track for a better life.

To date, 15,000 children have been served by the Tulare County CASA volunteers who have worked over 300,000 volunteer hours. CASA volunteers come from every walk of life and share a commitment to improving children's lives and protecting the welfare of our community's youth.

Organizations like the Tulare County CASA help create a safe community for our children and I want to thank every volunteer for their commitment to our youth. Thanks to their work, the children in our region have an advocate to help protect them from further violence, abuse, and neglect.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating the Tulare County Court Appointed Special Advocates on their 40th anniversary for their hard work, which will be felt for generations to come.

HONORING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JESUS ANTONIO PEÑA, UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. TONY GONZALES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2025

Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man whose legacy is both profoundly American and profoundly personal to me—my grandfather,