

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,

Jesus Antonio Peña, a soldier, a father, a civil servant, and an enduring example of quiet courage.

Born to Mrs. Luisa G. Peña and Mr. Jesus G. Peña, my grandfather grew up in Texas, in a home where service, sacrifice, and faith were part of everyday life. At just 18 years old, he was drafted into the United States Army on December 21, 1943. Like so many young men of his generation, he answered his country's call without hesitation, stepping into history during one of the most dangerous moments the world has ever faced.

After basic training at Fort Sam Houston and Camp Shelby, Mississippi, he deployed overseas on August 4, 1944. Soon, found himself on the shores of Utah Beach, landing in the shadow of D-Day and entering into the heart of World War II. From there, he fought through the freezing forests and unimaginable hardship of the Battle of the Bulge, one of the bloodiest and most pivotal engagements of the war.

Mr. Speaker, my grandfather was not alone in his service. He was one of six sons, four of them soldiers, all of them proud sons of South Texas, and he now lays to rest together at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. Our family's sacrifice is etched into the soil of that hallowed ground and into the history of our Nation.

One story, passed down through generations, speaks to both his humility and his conviction. When he reported for induction, the Army had mistakenly stamped his paperwork for the Navy. My grandfather looked at the officer and said, "Sir, all my brothers are in the Army." Without hesitation, the officer took the form, stamped Army across it, and told him, "Alright then, get out of here." And with that, he joined his brothers in service.

After the war, he continued serving his country, this time in civilian life. For 35 years, he worked at Kelly Air Force Base as an airplane electrician, ensuring that generations of service members had safe and reliable aircraft. He was a man who took pride in his work, who believed in doing things right, and who understood that service did not end when the uniform came off.

He returned home to his wife, Ruth, and together they built a life rooted in love, family, and perseverance. His eldest son was named in his honor, carrying forward his name and his legacy.

He was the embodiment of the values that define our greatest generation: duty, honor, sacrifice, and unwavering devotion to country. He was my greatest role model and inspired me to become a Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy.

Mr. Speaker, it is one of the greatest honors of my life to stand in this Chamber and speak his name: Jesus Antonio Peña. A young man from Texas who journeyed across an ocean to defend liberty. A soldier who braved the snows of Belgium. A patriot who came home and continued to serve. A grandfather whose strength and humility continue to guide his family to this day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. THOMAS R. SUOZZI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2025

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, during Roll Call vote No. 203, I was unable to vote. I would have voted NO.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, December 16, 2025 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

DECEMBER 17

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Business meeting to consider S. 291, to establish an interest-bearing account for the non-Federal contributions to the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program, S. 858, to authorize the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation to establish a commemorative work on the National Mall to honor the extraordinary acts of valor, selfless service, and sacrifice displayed by Medal of Honor recipients, S. 1341, to amend the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993 to add certain land to the Sarvis Creek Wilderness, S. 1363, to provide for greater cooperation and coordination between the Federal Government and the governing bodies and community users of land grant-mercedes in New Mexico relating to historical or traditional uses of certain land grant-mercedes on Federal public land, S. 1377, to ensure the maintenance of a herd of horses in Theodore Roosevelt National Park, S. 1470, to require the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to prioritize the completion of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, S. 1787, to establish the Dolores River National Conservation Area and the Dolores River Special Management Area in the State of Colorado, to protect private water rights in the State, S. 1860, to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey to Brian Head Town, Utah, certain National Forest System land, S. 2015, to direct the Secretary of the Interior and

the Secretary of Agriculture to encourage and expand the use of prescribed fire on land managed by the Department of the Interior or the Forest Service, with an emphasis on units of the National Forest System in the western and southeastern United States, to acknowledge and support the long-standing use of cultural burning by Indian Tribes and Indigenous practitioners, S. 2016, to exchange non-Federal land held by the Chugach Alaska Corporation for certain Federal Land in the Chugach Region, S. 2033, to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on existing programs, rules, and authorities that enable or inhibit wildfire mitigation across land ownership boundaries on Federal and non-Federal land, S. 2262, to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to clarify the nature of public investment for purposes of certain rulemaking, S. 2273, to amend the Act of July 10, 1890, to modify certain provisions relating to the disposal of public land in the State of Wyoming for educational purposes, S. 2546, to provide for an extension of the legislative authority of the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, S. 2881, to provide for the transfer of administrative jurisdiction over certain Federal land in the State of California.

SD-366

10 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To receive a closed briefing on the September 2, 2025, boat strike on narco-traffickers in the Caribbean.

SVC-217

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission.

SD-G50

10:15 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine pending calendar nominations.

SH-216

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Aviation, Space, and Innovation

To hold hearings to examine FAA's plan for ATC modernization, focusing on evaluating progress, ensuring accountability and results.

SR-253

Committee on Indian Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 3383, to amend the Act of August 9, 1955, to make improvements to that Act; to be immediately followed by hearings to examine S. 236, to amend the Act of August 9, 1955 (commonly known as the "Long-Term Leasing Act"), to authorize leases of up to 99 years for land in the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Reservation and land held in trust for the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), S. 1508, to confer jurisdiction on the State of Utah with respect to civil causes of action arising on or within the Indian lands of the Shivwits Band of Paiutes, S. 1513, to take certain Federal land in the State of Washington into trust for the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, S. 2735, to take certain Federal land in the State of California