

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### RECOGNIZING ANNA AMERICA LAROSA'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

#### HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2025*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ann Laughlin, an outstanding constituent from my district who recently celebrated her 100th birthday. Born on January 13, 1925, in the Bronx, New York, Ann's parents had recently arrived in the United States from Italy. As was the custom of her family, being the first-born daughter, she was named Anna, followed by the country of birth: Anna America LaRosa. Ann had one brother, Jack, and the family eventually settled in Bucks County.

Ann's father, Frank, was forever grateful for the freedom and opportunities he found in America. He loved this country and passed along that love to Ann, who proudly flew an American flag from her Doylestown balcony for many years. Ann learned important life lessons from her father during their many weekend excursions around New York City. He taught her compassion and an understanding of others, which are evident in the fine person she is today.

Ann graduated from Trenton High School and soon began working in Philadelphia where she met her husband, Hodge. On March 26, 1949, they eloped, beginning their life together. Their first home was in Philadelphia where their son Richard was born. In 1958, they moved to Levittown, Pennsylvania where they formed many lifelong friendships.

Ann has two grandchildren, Scott and Madeline. Ann loves to exchange photos and texts messages with her family and many friends. She is an avid reader of biographies and the newspaper, and she loves to watch old movies; both are habits she learned from her father.

As we celebrate her 100 years of life, we are grateful for the wonderful example of how to live life that she has shown to all who know her.

### HONORING STAFF SERGEANT FELIX LOPEZ ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

#### HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2025*

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Staff Sergeant Felix Lopez was born on February 17, 1925, in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico. He was raised with his brother, Lorenzo, by his single mother, Calixta Bonano. SSG Lopez entered the Army voluntarily in 1943 at the age of 17 and served as a rifleman with the 65th Infantry Regiment—known as the Borinqueneers—in Europe during World War II. He was later

called to duty in 1952 to serve in the Korean War. SSG Lopez remained on active duty and served with the 972nd Signal Battalion, USARPAC, in Qui Nhon, Vietnam.

After numerous postings throughout the United States, including three tours in Germany, SSG Lopez retired from the military in 1971 with over 23 years of dedicated service. He then returned to Puerto Rico and became a U.S. Marshal. SSG Lopez proudly served the Puerto Rican people until 1978, when he moved with his family to Orlando, Florida.

For his selfless and dedicated military service, SSG Lopez's awards and decorations include an Army Commendation Medal, Good Conduct Medal (5th award), American Defense Service Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal (with Germany clasp), Nation Defense Service Medal (with bronze silver star), Korean Service Medal (with two bronze service stars), Vietnam Service Medal (with two bronze serving stars), United Nations Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Ribbon (with Devise—1960), and Expert Badge (with carbine bar & rifle bar).

On April 13, 2016, in Washington, D.C., SSG Lopez and members of the Borinqueneers were presented with a Congressional Gold Medal for the regiment's valorous service in WWI, WWII, and Korea.

He is lovingly known as Felix "The Cat" Lopez, his favorite childhood cartoon. He has dedicated his life to his wife, Carmen, and three daughters, Maria, Mayra, and Sonia; his six grandchildren, Lourdes, Wendy, Kelly, Christian, Jonathan, and Giovanni; his nine great grandchildren, Joshua, Alyssa, Lorian, Alina, Briana, Lymarie, Lera, Emma, and Camilla; and his 3 great-great grandchildren, Victoria, Valentina, and Jenesis.

### SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF CHARLES F. KONECNY'S 93RD BIRTHDAY

#### HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2025*

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a constituent of mine, Charles F. Konecny, on his 93rd birthday. Charles Konecny is a proud husband, father, grandfather, and Korean War Veteran. Konecny is a resident of Bowling Green, Ohio and has been a member of St. Aloysius Catholic Church for more than six decades.

Charles was born on February 13, 1932. He began his service to our country in the U.S. Army when he was drafted in September of 1952 during the Korean War. Serving as a Corporal and doppler transmitter operator in the U.S. Army, Charles was first sent to Fort Meade in Maryland and then headed to the U.S. Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County, Maryland. In October of 1952, Charles was transferred to Redstone Arsenal

located in Huntsville, Alabama, where he studied missile maintenance. Then, in March of 1953, Charles was transferred to White Sands Proving Ground in New Mexico and continued his service as a doppler transmitter operator. In July of 1954, Charles was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army.

Mr. Speaker, we are grateful to men like Charles who honorably served his Nation and fellow countrymen. Today, on Charles' 93rd birthday, we recognize his unwavering service to our country and thank him for his service.

### TRIBUTE TO STUART K. SPENCER

#### HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2025*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to my good friend, Navy veteran, and acclaimed political adviser, Stuart (Stu) Spencer, who passed away in Palm Desert on Sunday, January 12, 2025. Stu was an incredibly influential and accomplished political leader in addition to being a personal friend, and he will be deeply missed.

In 1927, Stu was born in Phoenix, Arizona. His family relocated to southern California just two years later. After high school, Stu enlisted in the U.S. Navy where he served as a radar specialist onboard the USS *Rocky Mount* command ship. Following his discharge from the Navy, Stu earned a degree from California State University, Los Angeles. He worked as the Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Alhambra for many years before leaping into the world of politics. After volunteering on various campaigns, Stu was hired by the Los Angeles County GOP as an organizer. The following year, Stu joined together with his partner, Bill Roberts, to establish the Spencer-Roberts political consulting firm. Over the many years since its formation, the firm would go on to manage more than 400 campaigns.

In 1964, Stu managed the unsuccessful presidential primary campaign of Nelson Rockefeller, who ultimately lost to Barry Goldwater. His luck and life would change dramatically one year later when then-actor Ronald Reagan asked Stu to manage his longshot bid for governor in California. In a remarkable campaign guided by Stu, Reagan was elected governor in 1966 and then re-elected in 1970. In 1976, Stu had agreed to manage President Gerald Ford's election campaign before Reagan's decision to challenge Ford in a primary. Stu stayed loyal to Ford throughout that campaign but was asked by Reagan to manage his campaign for president in 1980. Throughout Reagan's eight years in the White House, Stu was a trusted aide close by his side. When he presented Stu with the Presidential Citizens Medal in 1989, Reagan said "he prevented more than a few poor decisions and aided in more than a few very good decisions." In 1993, Spencer was inducted into the Association of American Political Consultants Hall of Fame.

• 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.

Stu is survived by his beloved wife of 32 years, Barbara Spencer; two children from a previous marriage, Karen Spencer of Palm Desert and Steven Spencer of Dana Point; a stepdaughter, Debbie DeSilva of Carlsbad, and six grandchildren. I extend my personal and heartfelt condolences to the Spencer family, his friends, and everyone fortunate enough to know Stu. Although he may be gone, Stu's many contributions to our Nation have left an enduring legacy.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2025*

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I recently gave birth and am unable to travel to D.C. to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 40 and NAY on Roll Call No. 41.

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RECOGNIZING CASCADIA COLLEGE  
FOR 25 YEARS OF SERVING THE  
COMMUNITY

**HON. SUZAN K. DELBENE**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2025*

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Cascadia College for 25 years of invaluable service to students, faculty, and staff in Washington's 1st Congressional District and beyond. Since 2000, Cascadia College has strived to create a community that encourages life-long learning and delivers accessible and equitable educational experiences that motivate every person to achieve their academic goals and pursue a meaningful career. Offering 80 different certificates and degree pathways, Cascadia College places emphasis on teaching students how to think critically, learn actively, interact in diverse and complex environments, and communicate with clarity.

Recognized as an award-winning green campus, Cascadia College has made strides in sustainability. The campus is managed 100 percent pesticide free, and Cascadia has ranked number one in the Nation by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) for six consecutive years. Given the school's devotion to maintaining the 58-acres of wetlands on campus, pollinator gardens, and their Food Forest, Cascadia students have the opportunity to pursue academic degrees and programs revolving around sustainability and are offered a hands-on learning experience to enhance both their campus and the greater community.

It's an honor to represent Cascadia College in Congress, and I hope to see them operate for many more years to come. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Cascadia College and their continued service to inspire students and faculty to achieve their academic and career goals.

RECOGNITION OF CHARLOTTE  
CREMIN, SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR

**HON. BRYAN STEIL**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2025*

Mr. STEIL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service and dedication of Charlotte Cremin. Charlotte served my office for over six years. She was one of the first members of my team when I came to Congress in 2019 and has remained a loyal and trusted advisor throughout her tenure.

As every Member of Congress and staffer knows, taking on a new role in a freshman office is no easy task. Even throughout the challenges we faced as my office was stood up, Charlotte was always ready to take on something new for the team. I tasked Charlotte with managing the health care, veterans, foreign affairs, and defense legislative portfolio. Whether it was late nights reviewing NDAA amendments, or spending time listening to and helping each health care group or veteran who walked through my office door, I could always rely on Charlotte to get the job done well.

Charlotte has treated her colleagues and my constituents with kindness, professionalism, and respect. Everyone in the office could always rely on Charlotte. She has been a trusted advisor and staffer for Wisconsin's First Congressional District and her dedication and service will be greatly missed.

While Charlotte's title in my office has been Senior Policy Advisor, she has recently taken on the new role and title as a mom. Charlotte and her husband David welcomed Isabel Loretta Cremin into the world on November 20, 2024. I thank Charlotte for her steadfast commitment to serving Wisconsin's First Congressional District and wish her and her family the very best.

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HONORING THE CAREER OF JUAN  
FRANCISCO OCHOA

**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2025*

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Juan Francisco "Don Pancho" Ochoa of Laredo, Texas. Mr. Ochoa is a longtime Laredo restaurateur and is integral to the culture of South Texas and beyond.

Born in a large family in Sinaloa, Mexico, Mr. Ochoa first operated a small shoe store. After creating a novel way to marinate chicken, Mr. Ochoa knew he had a successful business opportunity.

Soon after, Mr. Ochoa's restaurant success began in 1975 when he opened El Pollo Loco, a legendary restaurant chain across Mexico and into California.

In 1987, Mr. Ochoa founded Taco Palenque, a second successful Mexican fast-casual chain. Today, Taco Palenque features 42 locations in Texas and Mexico.

Finally, in Laredo 2005, Mr. Ochoa started Palenque Grill, a family-style restaurant featuring live music and authentic Mexican recipes, many of which were created by his wife, Florida.

Mr. Ochoa is an exemplar of the American Dream. It is our country's promise that any dedicated, hard-working individual can build a business and thrive.

As someone born and raised in Laredo, Texas, I have always enjoyed spending time with family and friends at Taco Palenque and Palenque Grill. These restaurants are an institution in South Texas and are a cornerstone of our community.

On top of achieving the American Dream, Mr. Ochoa is also one of Laredo's greatest cultural ambassadors. His restaurants and kitchens bring the cuisine of south Texas and northern Mexico to the world.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating "Don Pancho" Ochoa for his incredible success.

Let us all strive to share our passion for our communities and honor those who show what it means to be an American.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JIMMY GOMEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2025*

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, on February 12, 2025, I was not recorded on Roll Call Votes No. 40 and No. 41.

Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on Roll Call Vote No. 40, and "NAY" on Roll Call Vote No. 41.

On February 13, 2025, I was not recorded on Roll Call Vote No. 42.

Had I been present, I would have voted "NAY" on Roll Call Vote No. 42.

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RECOGNIZING ERIC KIM

**HON. ZACHARY NUNN**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2025*

Mr. NUNN of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Eric Kim, for his distinguished service as the Legislative Director for our Congressional Office. Eric stepped into a high demand environment and helped successfully execute on a series of legislative victories to improve national security, reduce government red tape, and improve America's financial operations.

Together, with a team of four legislative assistants, Eric helped drive our defense sector's innovation in unmanned aerial vehicles, cybersecurity, and joint ventures with key international partners, like Israel, to protect our national interests. These efforts were enshrined in the National Defense Authorization Act.

Moreover, Eric brought his tenacity to developing legislation directly impacting the citizens of Iowa, by traveling and hearing from constituents first-hand. From these efforts, Eric helped deliver as one of the Top 10 most bipartisan members of the 118th Congress, according to the non-partisan Lugar Center and the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University.

Ultimately, I am proud to recognize Eric's efforts, his thoughtful consideration and his kindness, as a reflection of his service to Iowa, and the American people.