

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE  
OF REVEREND PHIL LAWSON

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 25, 2025*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with Representative MARK DESAULNIER to pay tribute to the Reverend Phil Lawson, a distinguished civil rights leader, pastor, and tireless advocate for social justice. Reverend Lawson passed away on January 26, 2025, at the age of 92.

Throughout his life, Reverend Lawson dedicated his life to the pursuit of equality, compassion, and nonviolence. Growing up in a family deeply committed to faith and social justice, Reverend Lawson was instilled with values that would guide his life's work. He diligently pursued higher education, earning degrees from Kent State University, Butler University, Methodist Theological Seminary, and Colgate Rochester Divinity School.

Starting at the age of 15, Reverend Lawson committed himself to justice and peace movements, participating in the Fellowship Reconciliation and studying non-violent direct action (NVDA) interventions under the leadership of Bayard Rustin and George Houser in Washington, D.C. Later, he joined the Army band in a non-combatant status and served from 1953 to 1956.

In the late 1960's and 1970's, Reverend Lawson emerged as a powerful voice for the civil rights movement. He participated in significant events such as the historic 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches alongside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a testament to his unwavering commitment to justice.

In addition, he served as the director of the Methodist Inner City Parish in Kansas City, Missouri, where under his leadership, the Inner City Parish played a pivotal role in organizing community initiatives, including working with the Black Panther Party and the Welfare Rights Organization to support and empower Black youth. Following his time in Kansas City, he transitioned to public service, working for the City of Berkeley as the Director of Program Development and Contract Administration from 1974 to 1980. Further, Reverend Lawson broke racial barriers as the first Black pastor of both El Cerrito UMC and First UMC in Vallejo.

In 1992, Reverend Lawson was appointed to lead the Easter Hill United Methodist Church (UMC) in Richmond, California, where he served with distinction for decades. He was instrumental in founding and supporting numerous organizations dedicated to social equity, including the East Bay Housing Organization (EBHO), the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP), and the Black Alliance for Just Immigration. His advocacy encompassed a broad spectrum of issues, from racial equality to immigration reform and homelessness.

Reverend Lawson's commitment to non-violence and social justice was evident throughout his life. He often emphasized that nonviolence was not merely an option but the only path toward true community. His contributions were recognized in 2003 when he was honored as Contra Costa County's Humanitarian of the Year.

Reverend Lawson will be remembered for his outstanding character and for the incred-

ible impact he's had on our community. Please join us in recognizing Reverend Phil Lawson for his many contributions to our community.

RECOGNIZING SHARON LAVONNE  
HARRIS RISCHER

**HON. MARC A. VEASEY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 25, 2025*

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I honor Sharon Lavonne Harris Rischer, a beloved member of our Fort Worth community, who passed away on February 12, 2025, at the age of 70. Sharon was a dedicated daughter, mother, sister, aunt, and friend, whose impact will be felt for generations to come.

Born on October 7, 1954, in Fort Worth, Texas, Sharon was a proud graduate of the Lake Como Class of 1973, having attended both Lake Como High School and Western Hills High School. She further pursued her education at Tarrant County College before beginning a distinguished career that spanned several decades. Sharon worked with unwavering commitment at Standard Meat Company from 1979 to 1993 and then with Tarrant County MHMR from 1993 until her retirement in 2014.

Sharon's faith was an integral part of her life. She was baptized at an early age and remained a devoted member of the Lake Como Church of Christ, where she was a constant source of love and encouragement to those around her. Beyond her professional and spiritual dedication, Sharon found joy in the simple pleasures of life. She was an avid cook, enjoyed shopping, and brought warmth and laughter to family gatherings, particularly during friendly card games that brought her loved ones together.

Her life was characterized by her deep care for others, and she will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her. I would also like to extend the family's gratitude to the Advanced Heart and Lung Disease Center at Baylor Scott & White Fort Worth Campus and Dr. Salmon Gohar for their compassionate care during Sharon's final days.

Sharon Lavonne Harris Rischer was truly a pillar of our community, and her legacy of kindness, faith, and family will endure in the hearts of those she leaves behind. May she rest in peace, and may her memory continue to inspire all who knew her.

RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF  
DOUGLASVILLE, GEORGIA ON ITS  
SESQUICENTENNIAL BIRTHDAY

**HON. LUCY MCBATH**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 25, 2025*

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the City of Douglasville on the occasion of its Sesquicentennial Birthday. For 150 years, Douglasville has contributed to the rich history of the state of Georgia, and I am honored to uplift today's remarkable milestone. Back home in my district, constituents will gather this evening at the Douglas County Mu-

seum of History & Art for a reflection on the history of the city and a celebration of the progress they hope to make in the future.

I want to commend Mayor Rochelle Robinson, the Douglasville City Council, and every resident who made this week's celebration possible. It is thanks to the devotion of public servants like them who make Douglasville such a wonderful community in which to live, work, and raise a family.

I congratulate the City of Douglasville on reaching 150 years, and Happy Birthday.

RECOGNIZING ANNETTE STOLBA

**HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 25, 2025*

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Annette Stolba of Buena Vista, Colorado for her 42 years of service with the Chaffee County Communications Center.

Annette began her career as a public safety dispatcher in 1983 before 911 emergency services were available. Over the next 40 years, Annette helped countless Chaffee County residents in their time of need. The Chaffee County community will remember Annette's role in keeping them and their loved ones safe.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's Seventh Congressional District, it is my honor to thank Annette Stolba for her four decades of service to the citizens of Chaffee County.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOSEPH  
M. BRISTOW

**HON. THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 25, 2025*

Mr. KEAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of Joseph M. Bristow, a former Councilman from Hackettstown. Joseph Bristow brought his passion for preservation and community to Fredon Township, New Jersey.

He was a true New Jersey icon whose legacy of kindness, service, and dedication to his community will be remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing him. A graduate of the University of Connecticut, Joseph earned a Bachelor's degree followed by a Master's degree from Villanova University. He also pursued doctoral courses at the New School for Social Research, reflecting his lifelong dedication to education.

Joseph spent over four decades as a professor at County College of Morris (CCM), where his belief in the transformative power of knowledge inspired generations of students. Inspired by change, he saw the potential for enhancing his community. He was a founding member of the Committee for Crime Prevention (known as the DARE program), demonstrating his commitment to creating a safer and more just environment. His dedication extended to the younger generation as a devoted Little League coach, where he taught not just the fundamentals of the game, but also the values of teamwork and determination.

As a Town Councilman, a member of the Board of Adjustment, and a member of the Library Board, Joseph was known for working tirelessly to be a beacon of change for his community. Faith was central to Joseph's life and influenced everything he pursued. He was a dedicated member of Trinity United Methodist Church and an active participant in the United Methodist Men's group. His unwavering belief in the power of community and spirituality was evident in all that he did.

Our hearts go out to his wife, Patricia, and his three children—Joseph, Laurie, and Thomas—and all who knew and loved him. May his memory continue to inspire us all and live in the heart of our city.

#### CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JAY DUNLAP

#### HON. MIKE FLOOD

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 25, 2025*

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Jay Dunlap, whose work in financial services helped create hundreds of great jobs and strengthened communities across the Cornhusker State.

Born in Douglas, Nebraska, Jay completed college and then spent two years of service in the United States Navy. After leaving the military, he put his experience to work finding remarkable success in Nebraska's banking sector.

Jay was instrumental in the growth of two prominent Nebraska banks, each of which continues to carry forward his legacy of hard work, dedication, and a deep commitment to giving back to the communities they serve.

Jay's life's work was not just about banking. It was about building relationships and investing in the future of Nebraskans. He will be deeply missed, not only as a pillar of Nebraska's economic success, but also as an inspiring example of integrity and generosity.

Our hearts and prayers go out to Shirley and the entire Dunlap family as we all celebrate his life and legacy.

#### HONORING COACH BEN REAVES, JR. AND THE MILTON HIGH SCHOOL EAGLES FOOTBALL TEAM

#### HON. RICHARD McCORMICK

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 25, 2025*

Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true leader in our community. It is my distinct privilege to honor him and his team by sharing their achievements.

Ben Reaves, Jr. is the Head Football Coach of the Milton High School Eagles, who on December 17, 2025, beat Langston Hughes High School Panthers scoring 56–35 to clinch back-to-back State Championship titles in the highly competitive 5A Division of Georgia High School Football.

Their high-powered offense, led by starting Quarterback and Miami University bound Luke Nickel, University of Georgia commit Tight-End Ethan Barbour, and electric Running Back T.J.

Lester, steamrolled opponents over the previous two seasons. Football is in genetics. Coach Reaves inherited his passion for coaching and mentoring young athletes from his father, who was a longtime coach at Newton High School. After playing for his father in high school as a standout wide receiver, Coach Reaves played for a season at the University of Georgia before he transitioned to his true calling: coaching. After making multiple coaching stops on his journey, Coach Reaves joined Milton High School's staff as an offensive coordinator in 2017. As a member of the football coaching staff, he helped turn Milton High School into a football powerhouse building on top of the three region titles and playoff games the team has won since 1950.

In 2022, Coach Reaves took over the program from his successor, Coach Adam Clack, and has since led the Eagles to a strong 23–6 record. Coach Reaves exemplifies the tradition of football excellence in our community and is known by all as an incredible mentor, coach, father, husband, and friend. The success of the Milton High School team is a culmination of efforts, from the players to the coaches, parents, teachers, and training staff. However, there is no question about who the glue is that holds the program together and drives it toward excellence. I extend my best wishes to Coach Reaves and the entire Milton High School team going into the next season, Go Milton Eagles.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 25, 2025*

Ms. PETTERSEN. 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. 43; YEA on Roll Call No. 44; and YEA on Roll Call No. 45.

#### NEWSLETTER FROM CONGRESSMAN CHUCK EDWARDS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 25, 2025*

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following newsletter to give an update to my constituents on Hurricane Helene recovery efforts and legislation to protect U.S. communities.

Dear Friend,

The 119th Congress is well underway, and I'm excited to continue serving the people of Western North Carolina from my seats on the House Appropriations and Budget committees.

In addition to serving on the Appropriations Committee's Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee, I am honored to have been appointed to the role of vice chairman of the National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs Subcommittee.

Under a unified government, the new majority has a rare opportunity to reverse America's spiraling debt and create a safer and stronger future for our Nation. I'm eager to walk with my colleagues to make real

changes that will better the lives of the American people, continue to bring federal resources to aid in WNC's recovery, and fix how Washington works.

#### THE PEOPLE OF WNC ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

It was a privilege to welcome U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy to our mountains and accompany him to see the devastation brought by Hurricane Helene as well as our efforts to clean up and rebuild.

During his time in Haywood County, we surveyed the damage at I-40 near the Tennessee line, and it was confirmed that I-40 is set to partially reopen on March with one lane available in each direction.

The people of Western North Carolina continue to be reminded that we are not forgotten, and I appreciate Secretary Duffy for his attention to helping out mountain folk rebuild.

#### FIXING A BROKEN AGENCY

It's an honor to be named by President Trump to the FEMA task force to fix how this broken agency works.

After being on the ground throughout the Hurricane Helene response, it's clear that an overhaul of FEMA is necessary to more effectively and efficiently respond to natural disasters.

I'll be lending the insights I've gained so that our Nation will be fully prepared to prevent and respond to future disasters, and to save lives.

#### PROTECTING U.S. COMMUNITIES FROM THE FENTANYL AND BORDER CRISIS

In the House, we have voted on and passed multiple bills—including the HALT Fentanyl Act and the Agent Raul Gonzalez Officer Safety Act—to make our communities safe again by combatting the fentanyl and border crises wrought by the previous administration's open border policies.

The temporary order designating fentanyl-related substances (FRS) as a Schedule I drug is set to expire soon. If this designation expires and is not made permanent, these substances will become street-legal, taking away law enforcement's authority to seize fentanyl and allowing drug traffickers to continue funneling deadly drugs into our country.

I voted in support of the HALT Fentanyl Act to permanently classify FRS as Schedule I drugs as defined by the Controlled Substances Act. Schedule I drugs have high potential for abuse with no accepted medical uses, and this bill would make sure that law enforcement has the resources to keep these drugs off our streets and allow for further research of FRS.

In addition to the fentanyl epidemic, many Americans have paid the price for illegal immigrants breaking our laws and engaging in high-speed chases to avoid detention. The Agent Raul Gonzalez Officer Safety Act would make it a criminal offense to operate a vehicle within 100 miles of the southern border while fleeing from Border Patrol agents or any law enforcement officer assisting Border Patrol, including jail time and being prohibited from ever receiving legal status in the U.S.

#### STREAMLINING THE FEMA APPLICATION PROCESS FOR DISASTER VICTIMS

After Helene hit Western North Carolina, I saw how complicated and difficult the disaster recovery assistance applications were. Many folks had to apply to multiple agencies, including FEMA, the SBA and USDA, for disaster assistance, each of which had its own extensive applications.

That's why I introduced the Disaster Survivors Fairness Act, which would streamline FEMA's application process and improve coordination among federal agencies to more effectively aid disaster victims.