

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HEROES TEXANS ON MISSION

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 13, 2025

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our Texas-24 Hometown Heroes Texans on Mission, a group of exceptional North Texans working to provide aid and relief to communities hit by the hurricanes. Hurricanes Helene and Milton devastated communities across the southeast, killing hundreds, destroying homes, and leaving hundreds of thousands without power. The more than 100 volunteer members of Dallas-based Texas on Mission have stepped up to help storm victims by providing practical assistance including cleaning out homes, serving meals, cutting fallen trees, and delivering resources like mobile showers.

Texans on Mission has sent multiple groups of volunteers to help recover from these back-to-back hurricanes, timing the deployment from Dallas to ensure key disaster relief equipment was in Florida before Hurricane Milton made landfall. Their trucks are equipped to serve up to 10,000 meals a day, a lifeline for families devastated by the storm's destruction. These volunteers know firsthand the sense of helplessness and despair that follows such disasters, with many of them having experienced similar situations. As one of the volunteer leaders said, "we just want to bring that help, hope, and healing to them."

Texans on Mission volunteers exemplify the generous spirit of North Texas. I'd like to thank them for stepping up to provide critical relief and support to impacted communities.

RECOGNIZING COMMISSIONER CHARLES TEDESCO

HON. JASON CROW

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 13, 2025

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Adams County Commissioner Charles "Chaz" Tedesco for his service to Colorado. Commissioner Tedesco began his service by serving in the U.S. Navy, and as President of the United Steelworkers Union.

Commissioner Tedesco supported several initiatives to help vulnerable youth during his term, including Homes for Hope, a program for youth in emergency foster care in Adams County. He also served as Vice-Chair of the Former Foster Care Youth Steering Committee for the State of Colorado.

Commissioner Tedesco is a member of diverse boards and committees as he serves Adams County residents and all Coloradans, including the E-470 Authority, Airport Coordinating Committee, Aurora Economic Development Board of Directors, Veterans Advisory

Commission, Aerotropolis Regional Transit Authority, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Colorado Counties, Inc., County & Commissioners Acting Together, Child Welfare Allocation Committee, Metro Area County Commissioners, and National Association of Counties.

Commissioner Tedesco has been a consistent advocate for veterans and a voice for funding state and federal veterans' programs. He was integral in the formation of the Veterans Advisory Commission which seeks to address and work cooperatively with other county boards, councils, and staff regarding veterans' interests.

I thank Commissioner Tedesco for his service to our community as the Commissioner for District 2 on the Adams County Board of Commissioners.

RECOGNIZING EMMA BRUNDAGE'S GOLD AWARD

HON. MELANIE A. STANSBURY

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 13, 2025

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Emma Brundage. Emma is a member of Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails, Troop 10141, and has exemplified extraordinary leadership, creativity, and demonstrated a commitment to making a lasting impact, by earning the most prestigious award in Girl Scouting, the Gold Award.

Gold Award Girl Scouts are recognized as trailblazers who are willing to tackle the most pressing challenges facing their communities and the world with measurable, sustainable, and far-reaching results. To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, high school-age Girl Scouts must identify and investigate an issue they care about, devise a plan, and then lead a team of experts and community members to implement a project that produces lasting change. Over the course of 1–2 years, Gold Award Girl Scouts demonstrate significant initiative, commitment, and leadership, distinguishing them from their peers. Through their resourcefulness and perseverance, they embody the Girl Scout Law to truly make the world a better place.

Emma's project, "My Hair is My CROWN", was an excellent endeavor to address hair discrimination in our community. Emma took action by creating an educational exhibit, leading workshops on hair care and legal rights, and advocating for awareness about the CROWN Act at the New Mexico State Legislature to empower young girls to embrace their natural hair and feel confident in their identity, which will have a positive impact on our community for years to come.

On behalf of the 1st Congressional District of New Mexico, congratulations to Emma Brundage for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction in Girl Scouts, the Gold Award. I thank Emma for all the hard work she has done for our community.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 13, 2025

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Scottie Scheffler. At six years old, Scottie was swinging a golf club at the Royal Oaks range in Dallas, dreaming of one day playing with the pros. He was a natural, having great success at the youth level, and winning 75 times on the PGA Junior circuit.

While attending Highland Park High School, Scottie won individual state titles three years in a row as well as the 2013 U.S. Junior Amateur Golf Championship, earning him an invitation to play in his first PGA Tour event at age 17. His talent did not go unnoticed, and he was recruited to play collegiate golf at the University of Texas at Austin, where he helped his team win three Big 12 Championships. His accomplishments continued after college, claiming his first Masters Tournament title in 2022. Most recently, Scottie claimed his second Masters Tournament, making him the 18th golfer in history to win the Green Jacket more than once.

I'd like to thank Scottie for being an inspiration to young golfers in North Texas and across the country.

HONORING JUDGE ANDREW CARRUTHERS

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 13, 2025

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Judge Andrew Carruthers as he retires from the bench after more than half a century as a distinguished legal advocate and public servant.

Judge Carruthers was born in Fort Worth, Texas in 1945. His father, a minister, tended to a congregation of more than 600 worshippers at St. Andrew's Methodist Church, which was the largest Black Methodist church in Fort Worth. Despite the discrimination and segregation facing Black families, the young Carruthers children were surrounded by teachers, nurses, entrepreneurs, and other community leaders, leaving them with no shortage of role models.

In 1957, his father accepted an appointment to become pastor of St. Paul Methodist Church in San Antonio. The new congregation was warm and welcoming, and San Antonio quickly became home for the Carruthers family. Judge Carruthers graduated from Cuney Elementary School, Frederick Douglass Junior High, and Highlands High School, where he played in the band and ran cross-country and track.

● 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.

After graduating from the University of Texas at Austin in 1969, Judge Carruthers became a program representative for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, where he tended to Houston's neediest people. Shortly, after, he enrolled in law school at Texas Southern University and later attended St. Mary's University, where he supported himself as a bailiff for District Judge James E. Barlow of the 186th District.

After passing the bar exam, Judge Carruthers began his legal career, working first as an Assistant District Attorney in Bexar County and later for then-Texas Attorney General John Hill. He was then hired as a professor at Thurgood Marshall Law School, where he taught for eight years.

In 1982, Judge Carruthers returned to San Antonio and opened the Law Offices of Carruthers and Cunningham with his wife, Willie. Their son, Andrew C. Carruthers was born in 1983. Judge Cunningham is also blessed with two daughters, Aloyce Williams and Tammye Turner.

In 1989, Judge Carruthers was appointed Criminal Law Magistrate of Bexar County, a position that he would hold for the next 35 years. During his time as Criminal Law Magistrate, Judge Carruthers worked to advance the court's understanding of what it means to be competent to stand trial. This work is reflected in his presentations at legal conferences and the expansion of Bexar County's competency and sanity evaluation programs. Today, because of Judge Carruthers' leadership and innovation, the court now offers inpatient, outpatient and jail-based restoration programs for individuals with mental illnesses, and community based and residential care programs for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The dedication Judge Carruthers has demonstrated for the last 52 years has been instrumental for local judicial programs. His work has aided many and will continue to help individuals seeking assistance. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to express my gratitude for Judge Andrew Carruthers as he celebrates his retirement.

RECOGNIZING COMMISSIONER EVA HENRY

HON. JASON CROW

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 13, 2025

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Commissioner Eva Henry. Throughout her years in public service to Adams County, where she grew up and raised her family, she worked to improve the lives of all Coloradans.

Commissioner Henry championed several initiatives that elevated the state and made Colorado a better place to walk, live, and raise a family. As Commissioner, she led efforts to regulate the oil and gas industries, protect our environment, and preserve clean air and water. Under her leadership, Adams County became the first county in Colorado to regulate drilling in 2019, paving the way for other counties to follow.

Commissioner Henry partnered with Caraway to lower housing costs by repurposing the former Children and Family Services building for use as affordable housing.

To bolster the local economy, Commissioner Henry worked with aerospace companies and supported their moves to the state, further enhancing Colorado's aerospace ecosystem, the second-largest aerospace economy in the Nation.

Commissioner Henry's dedication to public service contributed to the betterment of Colorado and the well-being of thousands of our state's families. I thank Commissioner Eva Henry for her service and congratulate her on her retirement after 12 years as Commissioner of Adams County and five years as a member of the Thornton City Council.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HEROES BENNETT BRANDON AND HENRY

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 13, 2025

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our Texas-24 Hometown Heroes, Fort Worth Code Compliance Officer Bennett Brandon and Henry. In 2011, Bennett met Henry after he was brought to the Chuck and Brenda Silcox Animal Shelter malnourished and in poor physical health. They sparked a bond that still exists to this day.

After raising money for Henry's hospital bills, Bennett took him everywhere he could to highlight the amazing care provided to homeless pets by the Fort Worth animal shelter. To share his rescue story, Henry accompanied former Mayor Betsy Price to elementary schools across the city blessing over 10,000 students with his wagging tail. Serving as the city's canine ambassador, Henry has raised awareness of the challenges faced by homeless pets. He helped raise almost \$5 million to expand the Chuck Silcox Animal Shelter, taking a huge step towards ensuring animals have proper care and adequate space. Thanks to the advocacy of Bennett and Henry, euthanasia rates in Fort Worth shelters dropped from 70 percent to three percent.

After 20 years of amazing service, Bennett has retired, and Henry, following his cancer diagnosis, has retired after 13 years.

HONORING AUDREY MEYERS

HON. JOSH GOTTHEIMER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 13, 2025

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, Audrey Meyers has dedicated her career to advancing health care excellence for over four decades at the helm of Valley Health System and Valley Hospital, culminating in twenty-five years as CEO of Valley Health System.

Audrey has spearheaded the development of a groundbreaking, cutting-edge hospital campus in Paramus, New Jersey, enhancing health care innovation throughout the region.

Audrey has provided leadership at Valley Hospital, ranked one of the Top Three hospitals in New Jersey by U.S. News & World Report, named one of the World's Best Hospitals by Newsweek, and placed in the top two percent of hospitals nationwide by Healthgrades.

Audrey Meyers received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the New Jersey Hospital Association in recognition of her forty-four years of service.

HONORING ROBIN PHILIPS' RETIREMENT

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 13, 2025

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent, Ms. Robin Philips, for her lifelong commitment to defending women and girls' rights at home and abroad, and to congratulate her on her retirement. In 1995, Ms. Philips joined the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing domestic violence and other human right issues. She went on to found the Women's Human Rights Program that has made The Advocates, as it is known, a global leader on women's rights.

In 2002, Ms. Philips became the Executive Director of The Advocates. Under her leadership, Ms. Philips recruited thousands of volunteers to contribute their time and talent to providing legal services, outreach efforts, fact-finding, and operational support, strengthening not only the organization but the whole human rights movement. By keeping The Advocates' work primarily volunteer-driven, the organization was able to leverage \$156,300,282 (approximately \$7 million/year) worth of in-kind legal services over the past 22 years. Through it all, The Advocates has provided pro bono legal counsel to more than 7,000 victims of persecution, torture, trafficking, prolonged detention, and family violence in the Upper Midwest Region.

One shining example of Ms. Philips' accomplishments includes a report issued by The Advocates in 2008. The report laid the foundation for Minnesota's Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Youth Act, transforming the state's approach to addressing sex trafficking by prioritizing the protection and support of victims and those at risk.

Under Ms Philips' leadership, The Advocates led many high-profile transitional projects in Peru, Siena Leone, and Liberia, which highlighted the dire need for human rights advocacy in post-conflict healing and reconciliation processes. At the request of the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), The Advocates led the Liberian TRC Diaspora Project by documenting the human rights abuses experienced by the thousands of Liberians who were arrested, tortured, abused and forced to leave the country after prolonged civil war during the 1990's. Under her leadership, The Advocates recruited over 600 volunteers to provide more than \$10 million in pro bono services to the Liberian TRC. As a result, The Advocates documented statements, stories and testimonials from more than 1,600 Liberian individuals and witnesses in the US, UK and Ghana. Through the Liberian TRC Diaspora Project, The Advocates held the first public hearings of a national truth commission in St. Paul in June 2008. Today, Liberia is implementing several of the recommendations made in the report, most notably by establishing a War and Economic Crimes Court.