

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
REVEREND FATHER THEODORE
“TED” POTERES

HON. FRANK J. MRVAN

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I rise today to congratulate Reverend Father Theodore “Ted” Poteres, Proistamenos of Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Merrillville, Indiana, on his retirement. For his twenty-eight years of leadership and unwavering devotion to the parish and to his community, Father Ted will be honored at a retirement celebration on May 18, 2025, at Saints Constantine and Helen Banquet Center.

Reverend Father Ted Poteres was ordained in 1984 and began his career as parish priest of Saints Constantine and Helen in Rockford, Illinois, where he served for more than ten years. In 1997, he became the priest at Saints Constantine and Helen in Merrillville, Indiana. For his outstanding career in the priesthood spanning a remarkable forty-one years, Father Ted is worthy of the highest praise.

Throughout his noteworthy career, Father Ted has worked tirelessly to support those most in need throughout the region. Under his direction at the cathedral in Merrillville, the church’s ministries have continued to grow and expand. These programs include the Angel Tree program, the Harvest for Hungry program, winter clothing drives, back-to-school supply drives, hosting the Ross Township food pantry, and supporting the AHEPA low-income senior housing residents. In addition to his ministry efforts, providing his parishioners and the community with spiritual guidance has always been of the utmost importance to Father Ted, and he has done so with absolute integrity and grace. He has worked diligently to counsel his parishioners and the surrounding community on issues such as alcohol and drug abuse, child abuse, suicide, cancer, HIV and AIDS, grief, marriage counseling, and youth concerns.

Outside of his tireless work at the cathedral, Father Ted gives of his time and effort to numerous charitable endeavors within the community. He also serves on boards and committees for several organizations including the Chicago Metropolis for Jewish-Christian Dialogue, the Chicago Metropolis Youth Retreat Camps, the Northwest Indiana Orthodox Clergy Association, and the Merrillville Clergy Association, among others.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Reverend Father Ted Poteres for his extraordinary leadership at Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Merrillville, Indiana, and to wish him well upon his retirement. For his lifetime of service to others and dedication to providing spiritual guidance and support to those most in need, Father Ted serves as an inspiration to us all.

RECOGNIZING SARBELIO GUEVARA
GONZALEZ

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sarbelio Guevara Gonzalez for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Sarbelio has overcome many challenges along his journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Sarbelio, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Sarbelio’s hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Sarbelio Guevara Gonzalez on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING EAST HARTFORD’S
PATRICK AGYEMANG: FROM
PARKS AND RECREATION TO
THE U.S. MEN’S NATIONAL TEAM

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to celebrate the remarkable achievements of East Hartford’s own Patrick Agyemang, who recently joined the U.S. Men’s National Team. From being named a 2017 All-Conference soccer player while at East Hartford High School, to playing soccer for my alma mater, Eastern Connecticut State University, to his new position on the USMNT, Patrick’s hometown has watched with pride as he represents the best of our community.

The following article by Steven Goff, originally published in The Washington Post and republished in our local paper, The East Hartford Gazette, encapsulates Patrick’s journey from spectator to soccer star:

Patrick Agyemang was 9 when he found his seat at Rentschler Field in East Hartford to watch the U.S. men’s national soccer team play one of its final tune-ups for the 2010 World Cup.

He lived a few minutes from the stadium in a working-class home the family called “the Headquarters”—the place where he and his two brothers, parents and friends enjoyed most of their time together.

With his participation and passion in the sport swelling, Patrick couldn’t wait for kickoff against the Czech Republic. He stared out and saw Clint Dempsey, Landon Donovan and other stars pass through the players’ tunnel and in that moment tried seeing himself someday making that walk in U.S. colors.

“It’s funny, because I still kind of remember how I felt,” he said Tuesday. “It was a sense of excitement, and I was like: ‘This is where I want to be. I don’t know how, but I would love to be on that field, to play for the country and be able to know that my parents [someday] could come to this game and watch me.’”

Almost 15 years have passed, and Agyemang is in a U.S. uniform—not pre-

paring for a World Cup but making gains with the national team after climbing the ladder as a relative unknown from NCAA Division III to Division I, to MLS’s developmental league, then to MLS with Charlotte FC, where last year he made the league minimum (\$71,401).

In his first appearance for the national program at any level, Agyemang started and scored the second U.S. goal Saturday during a 3-1 victory over Venezuela in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Agyemang (pronounced Aaw-jee-mawn) earned his place this month after scoring a team best 10 goals in MLS last year. On Saturday, the 24-year-old forward was among eight players to make their U.S. debut.

“There was a level of uncertainty, just because I’ve never been in an environment like this,” Agyemang said of his first camp. “I just wanted to come in being myself, completely myself, and, showing it on and off the field. I think I was able to do that, but the guys and the coaching staff made it way more easy than I expected and just made it an experience I won’t forget.”

Patrick Agyemang had never been invited to a U.S. camp at any level until this month.

Agile and 6-foot-4, Agyemang displayed qualities in the open field and on set pieces Saturday. He drew a penalty kick less than two minutes into the match—Matko Miljevic failed to convert—and proved dangerous on the counterattack.

“I think he can be very, very, very useful,” Pochettino said. “He’s still young, still has room to improve. . . . I am so happy with him. His performance was really good. He’s capable to add [something] different to the team that sometimes we were missing a little bit. It’s a very good alternative.”

Over the years, the U.S. program has employed tall center backs and goalkeepers but few towering forwards. Agyemang sprouted five inches before his junior year in high school and kept growing.

“He’s apparently 6-4, but I think he’s like 6-6,” said U.S. left back DeJuan Jones, who has played against Agyemang in MLS. “He’s got the Height—tough to mark on corners, for sure—and then he’s very quick and agile, and his holdup play is nice as well. It’s nice to be on his team for once. One to watch out for.”

Agyemang’s parents emigrated from Ghana and juggled multiple jobs while raising three children. Soccer was central to their upbringing with neighborhood games, school teams and youth leagues.

During World Cups, family and friends gathered to watch the Black Stars, Ghana’s national team. In 2006, 2010 and 2014, the United States and Ghana faced each other at the World Cup, with the Black Stars winning the first two.

“I remember 2010 I was actually at one of my teammates’ house,” Agyemang said. “We were having a pool party. All the parents were in the living room. Whoever scores, they’ll scream, then the other group will scream. It was a lot because it was a diverse place. I think I was rooting for both.”

Despite excelling for his high school and club, he did not receive any offers from NCAA Division I or II programs. He landed at Eastern Connecticut State. Agyemang was the league’s rookie of the year.

HONORING BRAD BARNES' RETIREMENT AS PRESIDENT OF THE FORT WORTH STOCK SHOW AND RODEO

HON. CRAIG A. GOLDMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Brad Barnes in his retirement from serving as President of the Stock Show and Rodeo in Fort Worth, Texas. The Stock Show and Rodeo is the city's oldest and largest annual event, gathering millions of visitors every year. Showcasing both professional rodeo athletes and thousands of kids from across Texas, this event continues to reflect Fort Worth's rich cultural heritage.

In his many years with the Stock Show and Rodeo, Mr. Barnes volunteered before becoming a full-time employee in 2004. During this time, the rodeo moved from the historic Will Rogers Coliseum to Dickies Arena. Payout winnings for contestants grew to 1.5 million dollars and expanded the attendance rate exponentially. Always looking ahead, he has prepared the initiative to renovate the Will Rogers Coliseum in pursuit of preserving its historical significance to Fort Worth.

Since 1985, premiums, scholarships, and grants for Texas youth have accumulated over 100 million dollars. Under the leadership of Mr. Barnes, the 2025 Junior Sale of Champions alone raised more than 10 million dollars. The Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo represents the cultural heart of Fort Worth, starting from the early days on the Chisholm Trail driving cattle to now being a symbol of where "The West Begins." Mr. Barnes has worked tirelessly to preserve Fort Worth's connection to its origin, believing that without it, it will just be another city on the list of many in Texas.

On behalf of the 12th Congressional District of Texas, it is an honor to recognize Mr. Brad Barnes's humble commitment to the Fort Worth community. I wish the best to him and his family as they celebrate his retirement and continue to be committed members of the community.

RECOGNIZING JAMES MILLARD

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize James Millard for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

James has overcome many challenges along his journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like James, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to James's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate James Millard on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING MR. KEITH H. JOHNSON

HON. SUHAS SUBRAMANYAM

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Keith H. Johnson. As Chief Keith Johnson prepares to retire this month, I rise to honor his distinguished career and service to the Loudoun County Fire and Rescue System.

Chief Johnson is a fourth-generation firefighter who began his fire service in 1982. His career led him to the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, where he ascended to the rank of Deputy Chief in 2009. After more than 30 years of service in Fairfax County, Chief Johnson was appointed as the Assistant Chief of Operations with Loudoun County Fire and Rescue and, later, the Chief of the Loudoun County Fire and Rescue System in 2018. He possesses both Fire Inspector and Fire Investigator certifications with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs.

During his tenure, he led a department of nearly 500 career and more than 1,500 volunteer personnel, oversaw the implementation of a collective bargaining ordinance, created a 24 hour Operational Shift Commander program, and formed a behavioral health section. He also advocated for benefits and protections to include increased behavioral health benefits and cancer protections for first responders, as well as for the inclusion of fire sprinkler systems in residential homes.

Chief Johnson was recently named the Career Fire Chief of the Year in 2024. He continues to serve as Chair of the Governor's appointed Virginia Fire Services and on Virginia's Board of Housing and Community Development.

Congratulations to Chief Johnson on an exceptional career. I thank him for decades of service to our community, and I wish him well in his retirement.

RECOGNIZING CONSTITUENTS OF MINNESOTA'S THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT FOR THEIR WORK IN PROMOTING DEMOCRACY

HON. KELLY MORRISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Ms. MORRISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize several constituents in Minnesota's Third Congressional District. Their dedication to promoting democracy is to be commended. I recognize Sharon Billings, Caitlin Cahill, Keith Engel, Aditi Ginuga, Anne Leland, Cathy Olson, Dave Olson, Paula Ramaley, Cole Roepke, Adaline Shinkle, Brad Shinkle, Diane Sjolander, and Anita Smithson.

The people of Minnesota's Third Congressional District are fortunate to have them as neighbors, friends, and community members.

RECOGNIZING CARLOS ALBERTO GUTIERREZ PACHECHO

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Carlos Alberto Gutierrez Pachecho for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Carlos has overcome many challenges along his journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Carlos, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Carlos's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Drake Middle School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Carlos Alberto Gutierrez Pachecho on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING JEFF DEWITT'S RETIREMENT FROM THE FORT WORTH FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. CRAIG A. GOLDMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Jeffrey L. DeWitt on his retirement from the Fort Worth Fire Department after 37 years of dedication and service to the City of Fort Worth. Founded 152 years ago, the Fort Worth Fire Department is a nationally recognized agency with a rich history of serving and protecting the 13th-largest city in the nation.

Born and raised in Upstate New York, Mr. DeWitt moved to Texas as quickly as he could. He became one of the first paid firefighters with the Keller Fire Department in the early 1980s. He joined the Fort Worth Fire Department on May 6, 1988, as a full-time commissioned firefighter in Class 41. Over his career, he served in four stations, including the historic Downtown Station 1, where he was assigned on December 12, 1997. The following year, he was promoted to Engineer at Station 1. During this time, he had the honor of driving "The Big One," the largest engine at the Fort Worth Fire Department for 13 years—a fact his young daughters proudly shared, saying, "Dad drives the big truck downtown."

In addition to his many years with the Fort Worth Fire Department, he has spent nearly two decades instructing classes at the Fire Academy at Tarrant County College. As an instructor for both new recruits and continuing certification courses for commissioned firefighters, his positive impact extends to other fire departments across the State of Texas.

Now, as he retires from Station 35 in the critical Fort Worth Alliance Airport Corridor, Mr. DeWitt holds the distinction of being the department's senior-most engineer and a certified Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) firefighter.

Mr. DeWitt truly exemplifies the mission of the Fort Worth Fire Department. Throughout