

Counsel at the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Enforcement Division. She was in her office at Main Treasury when the terrorist attacks began. That fateful day changed the world and changed Ms. Kerner's life.

A few weeks later, Congress enacted the Aviation and Transportation Security Act and established TSA. Ms. Kerner was one of a small group of federal workers chosen to stand up the fledgling agency with a monumental task ahead of them.

To secure U.S. passengers and the American people from the grave threat posed by airline hijackers, Congress mandated that TSA begin screening passengers and checked baggage at 450 commercial airports within just a few months. Meeting these deadlines at the time required the largest mobilization of the federal government since WWII and the largest civilian undertaking in the history of the U.S. government.

As TSA Chief Counsel, Ms. Kerner was responsible for providing the legal and policy advice for this record level of mobilization. For the next 23 years, she served as a principal architect of TSA's mission-critical programs and operations, supported by the outstanding team of attorneys she recruited, guided, and whose careers in Federal Service she unstintingly advanced.

Prior to being named TSA's Chief Counsel, Ms. Kerner's Federal career spanned two decades, beginning as Counsel to the Inspector General (IG) at the Commerce Department in 1979 before serving in several managerial positions at the Treasury. She later helped the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms overhaul its fair hiring, promotion and professional development programs.

Ms. Kerner found her way into public service after earning her law degree at the New York University School of Law in 1974. While at NYU Law, she interned for the New York City Law Department and served with such distinction that her supervisor, Mary P. Bass, later asked her to work in the Carter Administration where Ms. Bass was serving as the first IG at the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Ms. Kerner is the recipient of numerous awards earned throughout her career of service, including the Presidential Meritorious Rank Awards in 2001 and 2022; the American University Roger W. Jones Award in 2023; the D.C. Bar Association's Beatrice Rosenberg Award for Excellence in Government Service; the Burton Award for Public Service in the Government; and the TSA Federal Woman's Program Trailblazer Award in 2011, in recognition of her efforts to advance the career of women at TSA.

Throughout her career, Ms. Kerner never lost sight of the importance of family. She was careful to foster a family-friendly environment in each office she led. Her devotion to her own family set a powerful example for the many employees that she supervised and mentored across her decades in federal service. I want to conclude by recognizing her husband Michael Klein, her children Elizabeth and Adam, her daughter-in-law Robin, and her grandchildren, Maxine, Louis and Sidney. On behalf of a grateful Nation and the residents of Maryland's beautiful Eighth District, I wish Francine Kerner and her family nothing but the best as they begin this new chapter in their lives.

## HONORING JIM HANDLEY FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO FLORIDA AGRICULTURE

### HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Jim Handley retired from his roles at the Florida Cattlemen's Association after 27 years of service on April 15, 2025. Executive vice president of the Florida Cattlemen's Association and chief executive officer of the Florida Beef Council since 1998, Jim has also served as executive director of the Florida Cattlemen's Foundation, executive director of the Florida COW PAC, chief operating officer of the Florida Cattle Enhancement Board, and managing editor of The Florida Cattleman and Livestock Journal.

Though Jim isn't one for fanfare, his contributions speak volumes. He has always led with heart—building genuine relationships and championing education, youth involvement, and public outreach. His guidance helped expand fundraising efforts, modernize facilities, and elevate Florida's cattle industry on multiple fronts. Jim's leadership has forged Florida into one of the strongest and most respected state associations in the country.

Throughout his career, Jim has also served on numerous volunteer boards, including the Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching (CARET), the Florida 4-H Foundation, the Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame, and the Florida Agriculture Council, among others. While he has received more awards than he would ever mention himself, one recent honor stands out. In 2024, he was both surprised and humbled by the establishment of the Jim Handley Endowed Professorship of Beef Sciences at the University of Florida. The endowment was created by the Florida Cattlemen's Foundation in recognition of Jim's unwavering commitment to the future of Florida's cattle industry, its people, and the quality of education coming from the state's flagship land-grant university.

Jim Handley retires, leaving a legacy of integrity, leadership, and loyal service to Florida agriculture.

## RECOGNIZING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF HOMESTRETCH

### HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 35th Anniversary of Homestretch, an extraordinary organization based in Northern Virginia that has transformed the lives of thousands of families facing homelessness and poverty.

Founded in 1990, Homestretch has served more than 2,500 families, providing not just shelter, but the comprehensive tools and support needed to achieve long-term stability and self-sufficiency. Their mission is deeply rooted in the belief that with the right resources, even the most vulnerable families can overcome the devastating cycles of homelessness and poverty.

We are in the midst of an unprecedented affordable housing crisis, both nationally and in

the Commonwealth of Virginia. Since 2020, homelessness in Virginia has increased by 10 percent, with family homelessness alone rising a staggering 17 percent between 2021 and 2022. The work of organizations like Homestretch has never been more vital.

Homestretch serves families in the most challenging of circumstances. 90 percent of the adults in their program are single mothers. A majority are survivors of domestic violence, individuals with disabilities or no work history, and many face high debt, damaged credit, and language barriers. Roughly 60 percent of those served are people of color, and one-third are refugees or seeking asylum.

Despite these challenges, Homestretch helps families not only secure housing, but also access education, develop a career path, find childcare, secure reliable transportation, and improve their physical and financial health.

Their model is comprehensive and long-term. Participants work toward degrees and certifications, learn financial literacy, improve their credit, save for the future, and gain the tools to provide for themselves and their children. Homestretch measures success not simply by whether a family finds shelter, but by whether they emerge with the ability to maintain stable housing, meet their basic needs, and chart a course toward economic mobility.

For someone experiencing homelessness, knowing you are part of a community that cares and will give you the assistance necessary to get back on your feet can help ease the burden of your plight. In a county as economically prosperous as Fairfax County, it can be easy to forget there are still citizens who go without the most basic necessities. Organizations like Homestretch are helping to make sure that we bring everyone to the table and providing all with a path towards economic success and independence.

This incredible work is made possible by the dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, and community partners who have supported Homestretch for 35 years. It is a shining example of what can be achieved when we invest in people, meet them where they are, and give them the tools they need to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Homestretch on its 35th Anniversary. Northern Virginia is stronger, healthier, and more compassionate because of the work of Homestretch.

## POEM TO HONOR DARIN COWARD

### HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Darin Coward who worked for 23 years at Colonial Williamsburg. He was beloved by all his co-workers and many guests over the years due to his hospitality and welcoming nature. My thoughts and prayers go out to his loved ones. I include in the RECORD the following poem:

A SPIRIT OF 76

In these the days of our lives, there are those who to us such warmth provide.  
All in their thoughts and deeds realized.  
Filling our hearts up so deep inside.  
Darin was such a man of warmth and caring.

Imbuing The Sprit of 76 in all his sharing.  
 Born in Michigan in 1976, later to cross the  
 heartland for a career to pursue.  
 To work in one of our forefather's bastion of  
 freedom true.  
 Colonial Williamsburg of that old red, white,  
 and blue.  
 A lover of history, why she called out to his  
 heart there was no mystery.  
 Like all the great Inn Keeper's of old, he too  
 was a shining example of hospitality to  
 behold.  
 Treating his guests like gold, to warm all of  
 their hearts and souls.  
 With that kind of smile from across the  
 room heart's would hold.  
 Humble as the day was long, all a part of his  
 life's and our Lord's song.  
 As year after year, visitors walked up to the  
 front desk hoping he'd appear.  
 Creating bonds of friendship throughout all  
 those years.  
 And why it hurts so bad, knowing what a  
 wonderful friend we once had here.  
 Who never let power go to his head, rising up  
 the ranks in what his fine life to all  
 had said.  
 The kind of boss every worker wishes by to  
 be led.  
 Now, proving only the good die young with  
 tear in eye, now in heaven in The Army  
 of our Lord an angel on high.  
 And in the coming years, as I walk the paths  
 of all magnificent patriots of the past  
 so here.  
 All have met Darin will remember him and  
 all those patriots and shed a tear.  
 All one in the same, great American Patriots  
 who once walked the streets here.  
 Tonight across Michigan and Williamsburg  
 as you lay your heads down to rest.  
 There comes a gentle rain, are but our Lord's  
 tears from up in Heaven to ease your  
 loved ones pain.  
 And they will hear Darin on the wind, and  
 when they wake will feel him next to  
 them where he's been,  
 Watching over them, until one fine day up in  
 Heaven they meet again.  
 And won't have to cry no more.  
 Our moments are fleeting, so it's our time on  
 Earth which surely shows our worth in  
 our greetings.  
 All over our Nation so many have been  
 touched by Darin meeting.  
 For his kindness and his caring this spirit of  
 76 with them sharing.  
 Like Frost said, "I have miles to go" before  
 I rest.  
 Life is short so like Darin always give your  
 best.  
 Rise . . . rise up to heaven Darin with tears  
 in yours eyes, for our world you have  
 blessed.  
 In loving memory of Darin Coward.  
 by Albert "Bert" Carey Caswell

**RECOGNIZING THE MARRIAGE OF  
 EMILY McLAUGHLIN WISNIEWSKI  
 AND BRANDEN ANTON  
 EHRENREICH**

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Emily McLaughlin Wisniewski and Mr. Branden Anton Ehrenreich, who were joined in marriage on Saturday, April 26, 2025. This special occasion celebrated the love between two remarkable individuals and marked the beautiful journey they have shared to-

gether. This union is a testament to the driven, thoughtful, and vibrant paths they have led to this important moment. Emily, native to New Jersey, is the daughter of John and Deborah Wisniewski. Born and raised in La Plata, Maryland, Branden is the son of Kurt and Tammy Ehrenreich.

Emily is a graduate of New York University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Political Science, and Georgetown University, where she obtained a Master of Science in Quantitative Economics and Econometrics. Emily has made significant contributions in her career, working for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and as a statistician for the U.S. Census Bureau. The Royal Conservatory of Music has rated her an accomplished, certified pianist. Branden holds a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from Mount Saint Mary's University and a Master of Science in Computer Science from Towson University. Branden is a talented research scientist at a research and engineering company. Together, Emily and Branden have built a strong, loving partnership that reflects their shared values and passions.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in leading this body in recognition of Emily McLaughlin Wisniewski and Branden Anton Ehrenreich as they embark on their marriage together. It is with great pleasure that I join their friends and family in honoring their exceptional union. I wish them a lifetime of happiness, love, and adventure.

**RECOGNIZING HARLEY CROSS,  
 GOLD AWARD**

**HON. W. GREGORY STEUBE**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

Mr. STEUBE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Harley Cross. Harley is a member of Girl Scouts of Gulf Coast Florida, Troop 5005, and has exemplified extraordinary leadership, innovative problem-solving, and a demonstrated commitment to making a lasting, positive 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.

Harley's project, Community Food Pantry, in partnership with the DeSoto County Sheriff's Office, Stamp Our Hunger, DeSoto Cares, All Faiths Food Bank, and local Girl Scout troops, was an excellent endeavor to address hunger in our community. Harley took action by collecting food donations, educating community members about food insecurity, and building a

brand new food pantry to serve her community, which will have a positive impact on our community for years to come.

On behalf of the 17th Congressional District of Florida, congratulations to Harley Cross for achieving the highest distinction in Girl Scouts, the Gold Award. We thank Harley for her leadership and making such a positive, lasting change in our community.

**HONORING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KENWOOD OAKLAND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION**

**HON. JONATHAN L. JACKSON**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2025*

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the remarkable 60th Anniversary of the Kenwood Oakland Community Organization (KOCO), a cornerstone of community empowerment and a beacon of hope in the 1st Congressional District of Illinois and the City of Chicago.

The Kenwood Oakland Community Organization, otherwise known as KOCO, was founded in 1965 by visionary community and religious leaders. It stands as one of the oldest Black-led, membership-based grassroots community organizations in Chicago. KOCO has served as a vital force for justice, dignity and transformation, steadfastly uplifting low-income and working African American families in the Kenwood-Oakland and broader Bronzeville communities.

KOCO's enduring mission is to cultivate multi-generational leadership and effect meaningful change in public policy. It has made significant strides through impactful campaigns that have expanded access to affordable housing, ensured equitable education opportunities, advanced youth leadership development, championed the rights and well-being of senior citizens and vigorously fought for healthcare access and environmental justice.

KOCO's dedication to their mission has achieved historic victories, leaving behind an indelible mark on the community. This includes the construction of King High School, the establishment of over 400 units for those that needed affordable housing, founding a vital community medical clinic, as well as establishing a national precedent through the successful reopening of Dyett High School, which followed a courageous 34-day hunger strike.

KOCO's advocacy has aided in the reopening of the University of Chicago's adult trauma center and secured the landmark Community Benefits Agreement that proactively prevents the displacement of long-term residents surrounding the Obama Presidential Center. Additionally, KOCO launched transformative initiatives such as GirlsLead, the Bronzeville Restorative Justice Hub, and the Silver Fox Café, each centering on healing the community and fostering economic development in the Black community.

Under the dedicated and visionary leadership of Executive Director Shannon Bennett, KOCO continues to expand its reach and deepen its impact while remaining grounded in its core mission: to empower new generations of Black leaders who will continue the vital