

understanding of the Pacific Northwest region and a steadfast commitment to delivering results for families, workers, and businesses across the district. His work on trade, foreign policy, and health care demonstrated a valuable combination of policy expertise, strategic insight, and tireless dedication.

Abe's contributions have made a real difference in people's lives. He helped lead efforts to stand up against harmful tariffs and supported the introduction of the Prevent Tariff Abuse Act, which aims to protect Washington's economy and jobs. Abe also showed deep commitment to fixing our health care system, playing a major role in advancing legislation to reform prior authorization to allow patients to get the care they need without facing hurdles. He also supported the construction of new military housing at Naval Station Everett to ensure our servicemembers and their families had a safe place to call home. Amid the baby formula shortage in 2022, Abe fought hard to remove tariffs on imported formula to ensure families had safe, affordable access to the nutrition infants need. Abe fought hard to secure disaster relief for dairy farmers and growers who were hit the hardest during the 2021 heat dome.

Through every challenge, Abe brought a calm presence, a sharp policy mind, and quick wit. This work often happened behind the scenes, but its impact will be felt across Washington's First District for years to come. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Abe Friedman and wishing him the best in his next chapter.

RECOGNIZING EMILY MAZZARO

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2025

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding contributions that Emily Mazzaro has made to our community through her volunteer service at Double Branch Elementary School. Emily is the PTA President at Double Branch Elementary School. There is no job too big or too small for her to take on. She can be seen most days on campus before the bell rings, whether volunteering in the media center assisting students, collaborating with staff members about the needs that they have and how she can assist them, or orchestrating amazing events for within the school community. This year alone, Emily has spearheaded large events such as our Rancher Roundup (school carnival) with a multitude of vendors from the community, and a variety of small and large fundraisers such as Build a Buddy that created revenue for technology needs, recess carts for all grade levels, and a backdrop with the school logo for special events with students. Under her leadership, the PTA also supports classroom needs with teacher grants, where teachers can individually or as a team request funds. She also supported the school's new PBIS House system with custom flags and t-shirts for all staff members, handmade by her. Just last year, the PTA donated over \$10,000 to the media center to refresh its library with new books. These are just a few of the examples of the programs and initiatives that Emily leads. We are so blessed that if we voice a

need, Emily responds quickly to fill it. In addition to being so hardworking, Emily is just a pleasure to work with. She always has a smile on her face and is ready with a quick joke to make those around her laugh. The entire staff adores her and is so appreciative of her efforts in making Double Branch a wonderful place for students to learn and grow. Emily is an integral part of the Double Branch school climate and culture.

It is clear Emily Mazzaro has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for her service. May we all strive to serve our communities with the same dedication and humility.

RECOGNIZING THE WEST AMWELL VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT ON THEIR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2025

Mr. KEAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the West Amwell Volunteer Fire Department as they celebrate 75 years of service to our community. Since its founding in 1949, the department has provided essential fire protection and rescue services to the residents of West Amwell Township. Their commitment to answering the call in times of need, often under dangerous and demanding conditions, is a testament to the sense of courage, duty, and selflessness embodying the very best of New Jersey's first responders. As June 14th approaches, the community comes together to reflect on this special milestone and honor the dedication of the men and women who have spent decades working to keep West Amwell safe.

As the West Amwell Volunteer Fire Department celebrates 75 years of distinguished service, I look forward to seeing their continued growth and commitment to public safety for years to come.

RECOGNIZING HARRY WHITE

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2025

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding contributions that Mr. Harry White has made to our community in the aftermath of Hurricane Milton. In addition to providing countless hours of direct support to neighbors and flood victims, he helped coordinate the collection and distribution of emergency supplies, meals and donated services to help those who needed help. A truly selfless leader, Mr. White was a strong advocate for bringing in government and non-profit resources to aid in the recovery process.

It is clear Mr. Harry White has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for his service. May we all strive to serve our communities with the same dedication and humility.

COMMEMORATING MAY 2, 2025 AS NATIONAL SPACE DAY

HON. DON BACON

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2025

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate National Space Day, a moment to honor the extraordinary contributions of the aerospace community to our Nation and the world. Designating May 2, 2025, as National Space Day gives us the opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the past, recognize the advancements of today, and inspire the possibilities of tomorrow.

Our Nation has long led the way in space exploration. From the Apollo missions that landed the first humans on the Moon to today's Artemis program, which will take us back to the Moon and beyond, the United States has shown what's possible when bold ideas meet determination. These milestones remind us of the pioneering spirit that defines America.

Today, we see that same spirit driving innovation in every corner of the space sector. NASA's groundbreaking missions, the Space Force's contributions to national security, and the work of private companies and universities are redefining what we can achieve in space. In Nebraska's 2nd Congressional District, we're witnessing history made through initiatives like the Big Red Satellite team, where students from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Aerospace eXperimental Payload team, along with middle and high school students from Lincoln, Omaha, and Aurora, built the state's first CubeSat satellite. This satellite, launched in 2024 on NASA's 30th commercial resupply mission to the International Space Station, represents the unlimited promise of our next generation.

Space exploration doesn't just inspire; it delivers real benefits to our daily lives. Our Nation's farmers utilize technologies like GPS, weather satellites, and internet connectivity, which has allowed our producers to increase efficiency and productivity in their operations. NASA's impact on Nebraska is significant, supporting 33 jobs and generating \$7.4 million in economic output, along with \$238,000 in state tax revenue. For every million dollars of economic output generated by NASA civil service employees, an additional \$6.6 million is sustained throughout our state economy.

Nebraska's contributions to space exploration are significant and growing. Four Nebraska suppliers have contributed to NASA's Artemis program, including manufacturing supplies for Exploration Ground Systems at NASA's Kennedy Space Center. We're also proud of our state's space heritage through Clayton C. Anderson, Nebraska's first and only astronaut, who spent 152 days aboard the International Space Station and conducted three spacewalks totaling over 18 hours.

Perhaps most importantly, National Space Day reminds us to invest in the next generation. By investing in STEM education, we ensure that young people across Nebraska and the Nation have the tools they need to dream big and take on the challenges of tomorrow. Programs like the NASA Nebraska Space Grant Consortium at the University of Nebraska Omaha and our state's partnerships

with the International Space Station are lighting the way for future scientists, engineers, and astronauts.

As we celebrate National Space Day, we must also remain vigilant in protecting NASA's crucial programs and funding. Any significant cuts to NASA's science funding would not only impact our space economy and workforce but could threaten our national security and technological leadership position. We must maintain America's preeminence in space.

I encourage all Americans to reflect on how space exploration shapes our lives and futures. I'm proud of our district's contributions to this great endeavor, and I look forward to seeing what we can achieve together in the years ahead.

RECOGNIZING JENNIFER MANKOTYA

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2025

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding contributions that Ms. Jennifer Mankotya has made to our community in the aftermath of Hurricane Milton. In addition to providing countless hours of direct support to neighbors and flood victims, she helped coordinate the collection and distribution of emergency supplies, meals and donated services to help those who needed help. A truly selfless leader, Ms. Mankotya was a strong advocate for bringing in government and non-profit resources to aid in the recovery process.

It is clear that Jennifer Mankotya has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for her service. May we all strive to serve our communities with the same dedication and humility.

HONORING BOB WESLEY FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO CENTRAL FLORIDA

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2025

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Bob Wesley was born in Marietta, Georgia, in 1953 to Martha "Pete" Wesley and Frank Wesley. Bob was the middle son among six siblings and was always different and quick-witted.

As a child who stood head and shoulders above other kindergartners, he immediately befriended the shortest kid in class. He convinced his brothers to play pranks on their mother, once taping over the speaker inside her phone, prompting a repairman visit and an eye roll from her. But while someone who didn't know him saw a goofy, funny jokester, he also showed an adult-like interest in government and protecting the rights of others.

He was stubborn. Rather than following the rules and cutting his long hair, Bob dropped out of Lakeland High School and enrolled in night school instead. He became a photographer and, for a short time, a traveling mechanic with a drag race funny car team, the Houston Hustler.

He then attended Polk County Community College and received his bachelor's in history at the University of West Florida. Bob found his passion when he pursued his interest in the law, freedom, and justice at Florida State University College of Law. He was then admitted to the Florida Bar and became a board-certified trial attorney. He eventually settled down in Orlando.

After decades as a successful defense attorney, Bob was elected as a Democrat for the Office of the Public Defender of Orange and Osceola counties in 2001. He was elected by the people and served in this role for 24 years, retiring in January of 2025. During his tenure as a public defender, Bob partnered with the community to help make justice equitable for all, regardless of race, status, or socioeconomic status. This was his legacy.

He gained national attention for his work to ensure professional clothing for his clients, those accused of crimes, those facing involuntary commitment for mental health and addiction, and children who appeared in delinquency cases. Bob hosted an annual clothing drive where he would greet people with smiles and jokes as they dropped off their clothes to be worn in court by his clients. He also created a community bail fund to help those without resources pay bail and be released from jail while awaiting trial.

Bob was an outspoken advocate against police profiling and harsher sentences for Black and brown people. He lobbied aggressively to reduce time behind bars for low-level, first-time offenders, fought for civil citations over arrests, and brought attention to issues with evidence handling and arrests of children in his circuit.

ISRAEL AT 77

HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2025

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD remarks submitted at the request of a Virginia Beach constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman of Temple Lev Tikvah, and are a reflection of his views:

Israel At 77—How poignant to affirm the special relationship between the U.S. and Israel, two close democratic allies, in our own Hampton Roads and Commonwealth of Virginia! Hampton Roads' military might is ever ready to stand by beleaguered Israel. Early in the Gaza War, the USS *Abraham Lincoln* aircraft carrier, where I had lectured on Holocaust Lessons, rushed to the Mediterranean to deter Israel's Iran led enemies. Currently the USS *Harry Truman* aircraft carrier is there hitting Yemen's Houthis who hit Israel. Uniquely, The Virginia Israel Advisory Board (VIAB) established in 1996, a Virginia government agency, advises the Governor on promoting economic, cultural and educational ties with Israel. Israel's 77th anniversary takes place in the long and dark shadow of the transforming events of October 7, 2023, continuing to impact the survival and meaning of the Jewish state from within and without. All those seeking searing reflection should turn to an essential book of blood, pain and love. Amir Tibon gifted Israeli author and noted journalist's recent *The Gates of Gaza (A Story of Betrayal, Survival, and Hope In Israel's Borderlands)*, Little, Brown and Company. 2024 is bound to be a classic.

This literary masterpiece offers eye-witness report from that "Black Sabbath" with its shocking Holocaust images, continuing to shake up the State of Israel, the Middle East and beyond. Tibon, his wife and two very young daughters survived a harrowing nightmare in their home's safe room in Kibbutz Nahal Oz, the closest Israeli community to Gaza. On that day, that will also live in infamy, they were terrorized in darkness and very small quarters till liberated by Amir's father, Noam, a retired Israeli general, who rushed with his wife from Tel Aviv to save their family. Both Amir and Noam were invited to share with then President Biden when he arrived in Israel on October 17. Both father and son firmly requested the release of barbarically treated 251 hostages, including American citizens. Captives' redemption is a top Jewish commandment and an honored Israeli tradition. Saving the remaining hostages is paramount! The author's angst is with the Nazi-like Hamas leaders as well as Prime Minister Netanyahu and his government for the colossal failure to forestall the October 7 debacle, requiring a state inquiry commission. A disturbing inclusion is the eulogy by the late Moshe Dayan, the iconic Israeli leader who back in April 30, 1956, spoke at Nahal Oz's first funeral. Dayan, initially arriving the day before for planned four weddings only to face the brutal murder of Roi Rutberg, Nahal Oz's security chief, by infiltrating Gazans. Dayan's stirring words created a stir in the young community for its pessimistic message relevant years later for the October 7 much larger calamity, raising troubling questions about a peaceful future. "Have we forgotten that this group of young people dwelling at Nahal Oz is bearing the heavy gates of Gaza on its shoulders? Beyond the furrow of the border, a sea of hatred and desire for revenge is swelling awaiting the day when serenity will dull our path . . . This is our life's choice: to be prepared and armed, strong and determined, lest the sword be stricken from our fist and our lives cut down"

Yet, unsettling as the current scenario is we are duty-bound at this significant 77th celebration of an Israel reborn representing 4,000 years of Jewish experience and persistence, to keep a balanced perspective. Israel's monumental accomplishments and gained substantial power—though still vulnerable—since its fragile 1948 establishment in the Holocaust's consuming shadow are promising. However, its internal conflicting core issues demand resolution and reconciliation to guarantee a robust democracy in a pluralistic Jewish context, eschewing both secular authoritarianism and oppressive theocracy. Otherwise, the gates of Gaza (the book's title) that biblical Samson carried facing the threatening Philistines, would now prove too heavy for heroic Israel at multi front war!

Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman is founder of Temple Lev Tikvah in Virginia Beach. He was born in Chu, Kazakhstan (USSR) to Polish Holocaust survivors who had met in Siberia. He spent his early childhood in Poland, Austria and Germany before moving to Israel in 1949.

RECOGNIZING COAST GUARD AUXILIARY CLEARWATER FLOTILLA 11-1'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2025

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Coast Guard Auxiliary Clearwater