

award from the Greater Celina Chamber of Commerce. I am pleased to recognize him today for a lifetime of public service and continued commitment to advancing our community and nation.

It is an honor to bestow Andy with the Patriot Award for his exceptional service to the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING BRIAN WISLER

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to recognize Mr. Brian Wisler on his well-earned retirement after 35 years.

Mr. Wisler was hired by the Central York School District in 1990 as an elementary physical education teacher—where he shortly after, in May of 1991 was the creator of the Central York School District Elementary Track meet—which was later renamed in honor of long-time principal Jefferey Fox (who supported the initiative), to the Jefferey Fox Track Meet. Starting with just five events the track meet has grown to now include myriad events including dozens of runs, javelin throws, long jump, long jump, tug of war, softball and foxtail throws and others—that sometimes feature entire classrooms on the field.

The incredible day of sportsmanship directed by Mr. Wisler has positively impacted thousands of students over the years—proving his dedication to the students of North Hills and Sinking Springs elementary schools. After 35 years of teaching and engaging students, and 33 track meets, Mr. Wisler's service sets the standard by which we should all be judged.

Mr. Speaker, I'm privileged and honored to recognize Mr. Brian Wisler on his retirement. I wish him and all his students Godspeed on their future adventures.

TRUMP'S FIRST 100 DAYS

SPEECH OF

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the challenges and burdens placed on Black Americans during the first 100 days of the Trump Administration. Donald Trump is undoing the progress African Americans have fought for, threatening justice, equality, and our democracy. His administration has cut jobs, programs, and services that help Black professionals, students, and business owners thrive. Mississippi's public universities invested over \$23 million in DEI programs that supported Black students, and now those programs are at risk. Donald Trump has also removed protections for minority-owned businesses, weakened civil rights enforcement, and cut funding for public health research, all while costs rise. More than 664,000 Mississippians are at risk of losing Medicaid. Black families, already facing chronic illness and poor healthcare access, will bear the full burden. Head Start, which serves nearly

20,000 children in Mississippi, is also in danger. Black children, who already face significant barriers to education, will be hit the hardest. These cuts cause actual harm and send the message that Black lives and futures don't matter. We deserve leadership that sees, hears, and fights for us. And we won't stop demanding it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ABRAHAM J. HAMADEH

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, due to unavoidable scheduling conflicts related to critical constituent matters, I was unable to cast my vote on Monday, May 5, 2025. The well-being of our veterans and the security of our Nation against foreign adversaries remain top priorities of mine. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 115 (H.R. 530—ACES Act); and YEA on Roll Call No. 116 (H.R. 36—MEGOBARI Act).

HONORING THE LIFE OF JEROME PRESTON OWENS, JR.

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Jerome Preston Owens, Jr., who passed away on Monday, April 21, 2025, at the age of 85.

Jerome was born on June 28, 1939, in Jasper, Texas to Reverend Jerome Preston, Sr. and Louise Nichols Owens. He graduated as Valedictorian of his class in Jena, Louisiana, where his father was the pastor of the First Baptist Church. Upon graduating, he received a football scholarship to play for Louisiana College. Jerome then patriotically served our country in the United States Marine Corps from 1960 to 1963.

His father served as pastor for the First Baptist Church in Nederland, Texas, which is where Jerome met Marilyn Fraser, the love of his life. In 1965, Jerome's father officiated their marriage and they began their lives together. Jerome and Marilyn were married for almost 60 years and were blessed with two daughters named Stacey and Sharla.

He earned his Juris Doctor degree in 1969 from Baylor School of Law. While studying at Baylor, he was actively involved in the collegiate community, serving as a member of Alpha Chi and Senior Class President. Jerome practiced as an attorney specializing in corporate law for Coastal Corporation in Corpus Christi and Houston, Texas, where he traveled extensively. Jerome's primary devotion throughout life was for his family. His young daughter's drawing of him holding his suitcase inspired him to relocate to a smaller community to have more time with his family. He chose to move to Woodville, Texas where he established his own law practice and raised cattle with his father.

Truly a man with a commitment to serve others and seeking to make a difference in the community, Jerome served as County Judge

of Tyler County for 17 years. He then served as a Texas State District Judge and a Texas Senior Judge. Jerome continued to faithfully serve his community by being a deacon and trustee of the First Baptist Church of Woodville. After moving to Houston, he became a deacon at Second Baptist Church in Kingwood, Texas.

He received many awards recognizing his dedication to public service. Jerome was named the "Ralph W. Steen Memorial East Texan of the Year," and "Tyler County Citizen of the Year." For his leadership and skills, he received the "Award for Excellence in Community Service," and the "American Hometown Leadership Award." Jerome was appointed by Governor Rick Perry to chair the Texas State Community Development Review Committee. Additionally, he served on the board of trustees for East Texas Baptist University, board of directors for the Tyler County Hospital, served as president for Deep East Texas Council of Governments, president for Deep East Texas County Commissioners and Judges Association, the Tyler County Bar Association, and fellow at the Texas Bar Association. He was also a member of the American Legion.

Jerome is remembered as "one who loved his family and friends, for his deep commitment to God, his unwavering integrity, his eloquent speeches, deep wisdom, quick wit, humor and bellying infectious laugh." Jerome was highly esteemed and adored by his family and community. His family has said, "He was an all-around kind of man, one that loved sports, southern food, current events and a good joke. He was well versed in politics and had an answer for any question asked of him." He served diligently, was a loving husband, father, and grandfather. Jerome was a lifetime friend and inspiration.

Jerome was preceded in death by his parents, Reverend Jerome Preston, Sr., and Louise Owens, and sister, Jane Owens Griffin. He is survived by his wife Marilyn Fraser Owens; daughter Stacy Owens Ekstein, son-in-law Chris Ekstein, daughter Dr. Sharla Owens Sundberg, son-in-law Dr. Eric Sundberg; grandchildren, Bella Frances Ekstein, Sophia Marilyn Ekstein, Savea Kenny Sundberg, Soren Jon Jerome Sundberg and Anders Owens Sundberg, sister, Diann Owens Dotson, brother-in-law Ray Dotson; brothers-in-law, Tom Fraser, III, and Ed Fraser, sister-in-law Jean Fraser; and many nephews and nieces.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor my dear friend, Jerome Owens, for his many years of faithful service to his community. My most sincere prayers remain with his family and friends during this difficult time.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, on May 5, 2025, I was unable to cast my vote on H.R. 530—ACES Act. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call Vote No. 115.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT WALTER HUNTER

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Walter Eugene Hunter of Celina, Texas, and present him with the Congressional Patriot Award. Walter has dedicated himself to faithfully serving our community and country.

As a young man, Walter was a decorated Boy Scout and Cub Scout leader and worked as a messenger boy for Western Union. During the Second World War, he heeded the call to defend our nation after witnessing the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, and he proudly enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. Walter served in combat as a Field Communications Specialist during the grueling battles of Guadalcanal, Bougainville, and Green Island, in which he was awarded a Unit Citation for his meritorious actions. He later worked in aviation electronics in North Carolina before being honorably discharged in 1945. During the conflict in Korea, Walter was also briefly called back to duty from the Reserves.

After his service, Walter has continued to be an upstanding American citizen, patriot, and family man. He met his late wife Irene, a US Army cadet nurse, and they were happily married for a remarkable 77 years. Together, they had three daughters and many more grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Walter earned his doctorate degree from the University of Colorado and guided the doctoral research of 65 graduate students at the University of Missouri. For his excellent teaching abilities and his students' achievements, Walter received cash awards from the American Chemical Society, which he used to purchase science books for the school library. He also raised thousands of dollars to install an FM radio station for students interested in learning radio communications. At the young age of 103, Walter frequently travels across the country to spend time with his family and remains passionate about learning. In his free time, Walter studies science and Chaos theory. I am grateful for Walter's extensive contributions to our community and country, and I wish him good health for many years to come.

It is an honor to bestow Walter with the Patriot Award for his exceptional service to the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING SUE ABDERHOLDEN FOR HER WORK ON BEHALF OF THOSE WITH DISABILITIES AND MENTAL ILLNESSES

HON. KELLY MORRISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Ms. MORRISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Sue Abderholden for her decades of tireless service and steadfast commitment to Minnesotans living with disabilities and mental illnesses.

For the past 24 years, Ms. Abderholden has served as Executive Director of the Minnesota

chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

Under her leadership, our state has become more compassionate, more informed, and more responsive to the needs of those facing mental health challenges.

She played a central role in passing over two dozen laws that expanded access to care and improved how we support people with mental illnesses.

Ms. Abderholden's advocacy brought mental health training into our schools, ensured screenings for individuals entering the justice system, and reformed civil commitment laws to emphasize voluntary treatment.

She expanded crisis and early intervention services, championed a more diverse mental health workforce, and worked to strengthen housing and community-based support services.

Her compassion extended to her home where Ms. Abderholden and her family fostered children with disabilities and youth aging out of foster care, offering stability and care when it was most needed.

On behalf of myself and countless Minnesotans, I offer my gratitude to Ms. Abderholden for her decades of hard work and service.

CELEBRATING TRINIDAD GÓMEZ'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. PETE AGUILAR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the 100th birthday of Ms. Trinidad "Trini" Gómez, a constituent and friend who has led an incredible life and made our community better and brighter for everyone who crossed her path.

Born in Gallup, New Mexico, in 1925 as the eldest of 12 children, Trini was no stranger to hard work. From learning English so she could attend school, to joining the railroad industry alongside other women during World War II, to becoming the sole breadwinner for her household following her husband's passing, Trini Gómez never met a challenge she could not overcome.

As a San Bernardino resident, Trini has had a profound impact on the Inland Empire's culture and history. In 1986, Trini and her late husband, Graciano Gómez, founded the Inland Empire Hispanic News, a newspaper that aimed to advocate for the greater Hispanic community in the region. The publication quickly became the largest-circulated English-language community newspaper in the Inland Empire and had a lasting impact on the community. The Inland Empire Hispanic News provided a platform for Hispanic voices, shed light on important political and activist issues and recognized the achievements and contributions of the Hispanic community. After 23 years of service, the archive of the publication became an indispensable record of Mexican American history in the Inland Empire.

Today, I wish Trini Gómez a happy birthday and thank her for her dedication to and love for the Inland Empire and the people who call it home. I hope all of us can pay tribute to her achievements and the profound impact she has had on countless people. May the coming year bring Trini good health, happiness and time spent with loved ones.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN H. RUTHERFORD

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, due to illness, I was unable to vote on May 1, 2025. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 113, and YEA on Roll Call No. 114.

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

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Coast Guard Auxiliary Clearwater Flotilla 11-1's 75th Anniversary. The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary was established by Congress to support the Coast Guard with its boat safety mission. Clearwater Flotilla 11-1's service to the Clearwater area predates the Coast Guard's presence in the city. Today, though, the Auxiliary provides direct and continuing support to Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater and to Coast Guard Station Sand Key. This June, the Clearwater Flotilla 11-1, celebrates its 75th anniversary of service to the boating public throughout the Tampa Bay area. The Coast Guard Auxiliary and Flotilla 11-1 provide invaluable support to the active-duty Coast Guard through a variety of non-law enforcement programs. These include search and rescue missions, marine environmental patrols, youth programs, public education and safety patrols. Additionally, their missions include search and rescue "call outs", back up marine radio coverage and near short patrols as part of the America's Waterway Watch Program. As the Coast Guard's homeland and national security responsibilities continue to expand, the men and women of the Auxiliary have stepped up to increase their port security patrols to provide for the defense of our Nation's and in our case Florida's coastline and waterways.

Last year, the Flotilla 11-1 members volunteered more than 9,100 hours in support of the Coast Guard. The group conducted ten boating safety education classes with more than 200 graduates, including over 100 children ranging from kindergarten to fifth grade. The group also performed almost 150 Vessel Safety Checks to ensure recreational boaters have all the safety gear they need to be legal and safe and conducted more than 175 Recreational Boating Safety Program Visits to boat equipment stores, marinas, and harbors to improve public safety. Flotilla 11-1 Clearwater operates under the leadership of Karen Miller, Commander, and Betsy Scott, Vice-Commander. The Flotilla 11-1's officers include: Jeff Otto—Communication Services, Debbie Mallory—Finance, Steve Bushnell-Fowler—Human Resources, Karen Miller—Information Services, Public Affairs, and Public Education, Joe Garisto—Materials, Mavrick Putnam—Marine Safety and Environmental Protection, Lisa Repetto—Publications and Recreational Boating Safety Program Visitation, Gerard Gaudry—Navigation Systems,