

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 Visits, Gerard Gaudry—Navigation Systems,

Tim Dolan—Operations and Rescue and Survival Systems, Mark Kolupa—Secretary/Records, and Andre Skoinezny—Vessel Examinations. It is my hope that my colleagues will join me in thanking the men and women of Clearwater Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 11-1 for their 75 years of service to our community and for a job well done.

RECOGNIZING CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD RECIPIENT PUNK CARTER

HON. PAT FALLON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Punk Carter of Celina, Texas,

and present him with the Congressional Patriot Award. Punk has dedicated himself to faithfully serving our community.

Originally from Sherman, Texas, Punk moved with his family to Celina and graduated from high school there in 1965. From a young age, he worked on a ranch to train cutting horses and participated in numerous cutting horse competitions. Punk is currently a director at large for the National Cutting Horse Association, where he previously served as an executive board member and president. For his outstanding contributions to the cutting horse industry, Punk was inducted into the National Cutting Horse Members Hall of Fame and the Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame. He was also voted as Celina's Citizen of the Year in 2010 and given the Key to the City in 2022.

In addition, Punk is passionate about helping individuals of all ages from around the

world learn about equines, as they are incredible companions. He serves as a 4A judge at cutting competitions and has earned numerous trophies and awards over the years for his expertise and skill in the cutting horse profession. Punk has also won a state cutting horse event alongside his daughter on Father's Day, making them the first father and daughter champion duo on that special occasion. I am pleased to recognize Punk for his dedication to serving our community and being an upstanding leader to those around him.

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