

RECOGNIZING PATRICIA  
SCHNEIDER

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 2025*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding contributions that Ms. Patricia Schneider has made to our community through her volunteerism with the Pregnancy & Family Life Center. Ms. Schneider is part of a team of selfless and dedicated women who have worked at the Center in Inverness for several years. Their roles include working each week in the food pantry and clothing room. Last year, 472 clients were served, and more than 65,000 pounds of food was distributed. These critical volunteers also ensure families receive essential items for their infants and young children to include: formula, diapers, pull ups, baby wipes and wash, as well as age specific clothing. In 2024, more than 44,000 diapers and 9,500 items of clothing were distributed. These volunteers have a 'can do' attitude no matter how large the challenge.

They also have tremendous teamwork. They sort through all donations, retain those appropriate for a pregnancy center and then share other serviceable items with community partners. Ms. Schneider also makes personal birthday cards for each client to help them feel connected. When volunteers are united in an important mission, it naturally fosters camaraderie which is great for anyone who works or volunteers at the Center. All of these women maintain a loving demeanor and greet each client with a warm smile and conversation (and sometimes a hug). The Center's clients feel welcomed and cared for because of the lived values of love, respect, compassion, and family centeredness that is regularly displayed by these dedicated volunteers. The benefit to the community is great and the impact far reaching.

It is clear that Patricia Schneider 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 JOURNEY BOLEJACK

**HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 2025*

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

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

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

SUPPORTING THE FALUN GONG  
PRACTITIONERS

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 2025*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Falun Gong practitioners and supporters in the District of Columbia and around the world who are working to end the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners.

As a former assistant legal director for the American Civil Liberties Union, constitutional lawyer and a lifelong human and civil rights advocate, I take this moment not only to speak out against the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, but also to remember those who have died for their beliefs.

Falun Gong is a peaceful religion that teaches self-improvement through meditation based on slow movements and regimented breathing. For over two decades, Falun Gong practitioners have suffered from detention, torture and organ harvesting at the hands of the Chinese government.

We must fight to raise awareness of those persecuted in China who cannot raise awareness themselves. On May 5, 2025, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1540, the Falun Gong Protection Act, which I strongly supported. I will continue to work with colleagues in the House and Senate to pass this bill.

I ask the House of Representatives to join me in solidarity with the many Falun Gong practitioners who fight for the freedom to speak and to practice the religion of their choice.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL WILLIAM G.  
SOTO

**HON. HERBERT C. CONAWAY, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 2025*

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career and service of Colonel William G. Soto, United States Air Force as he prepares to retire after an extraordinary twenty-four years of dedication to our Nation. Colonel Soto's legacy of service, most recently as Deputy Commander, 305th Air Mobility Wing, Joint Base McGuire Dix Lakehurst, New Jersey is a testament to his unwavering commitment to the security of the United States.

Colonel Soto received his commission in the Air Force in May 2001 after graduating from the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He went on to complete undergraduate pilot training in 2002 and has served as an aircraft commander, instructor pilot and evaluator pilot in multiple airframes. Colonel Soto has commanded several garrison and deployed squadrons, to include the 75th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, the 86th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, and the 65th Operations Support Squadron at Lajes Field, Portugal. He also served overseas in support of several combat, contingency, and support missions, and has combat experience in airlift, aerial refueling and operational support airlift.

Colonel Soto's staff appointments have spanned the operational, planning, policy, and diplomatic arenas. He previously served as Deputy Chief of the Iran, Iraq, and Syria Division within the Joint Staff J-5 where he developed policy options to inform U.S. government senior leaders, advance the President's policy priorities, and promote U.S. national security strategy interests. Other staff assignments included service as Deputy Chief of the Commander's Action Group for the Commander of U.S. Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa, and Aide-de-Camp to the Director of the U.S. Embassy Military Liaison to U.S. Forces in Afghanistan.

Colonel Soto retires as a command pilot with more than 3,800 flying hours, including 913 combat hours, and qualifications in the KC-135R/T, C-130J, C-20H, C-37A and KC-46 aircraft. Over Colonel Soto's distinguished career, he has earned numerous Joint and Air Force decorations including the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, six Meritorious Service Medals, four Air Medals and an Aerial Achievement Medal.

Currently, as Deputy Commander, 305th Air Mobility Command, Colonel Soto is second in command of a strategic wing, comprised of nearly 2,700 joint personnel responsible for maintaining, supporting and operating a fleet of 24 KC-46 Pegasus and 14 C-17 Globemaster III aircraft, providing rapid global mobility for national security objectives, combat operations, contingencies and humanitarian relief efforts worldwide, through aerial refueling and airlift capabilities. The wing is also responsible for controlling two airfields, some of the busiest airspace in the Nation, and two of Air Mobility Command's aerial ports, ensuring uninterrupted flow of forces and material in support of ongoing global operations.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Colonel William G. Soto's exemplary service to the United States. His selfless dedication, exceptional leadership, and many contributions have left a lasting impact on our Nation's security. I would also like to extend my deepest appreciation to his wife, Brittany, and their children, Amelie and Gavin, for their sacrifices and unwavering support throughout Colonel Soto's distinguished career. The Nation owes a debt of gratitude to our veterans, service members, and their families who give so much to defend our freedom and way of life.

HONORING LUIS HERRERA  
CAMPINS ON THE CENTENNIAL  
OF HIS BIRTH

**HON. DARREN SOTO**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 2025*

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Luis Herrera Campíns was born on May 4, 1925, in Acarigua, Venezuela.

Born into a middle-class family, Herrera Campíns was educated at a university in Caracas. Along with Rafael Caldera Rodríguez, he founded the Social Christian Party in 1946. This moderate party also known as the Christian Democrats, became the second-largest political party in Venezuela, after Democratic Action, in the decades following World War II.

In 1952, Herrera Campíns was arrested and sent into exile due to his activities against the

dictatorial regime of President Marcos Pérez Jiménez. He returned to Venezuela after the overthrow of Pérez in 1958 and was elected a member of the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of parliament, in 1959. Successively reelected, he served as chairman of the Social Christian faction in parliament until his election to the Senate in 1973. He was also secretary-general of the Latin American Congress of Christian Democratic organizations from 1969 to 1977.

Herrera Campíns was nominated as his party's presidential candidate in 1977 and went on to win the presidential election in 1978. He took office when the economic boom that Venezuela had enjoyed since world oil prices had quadrupled in 1973 had begun to show serious defects. His administration is remembered for its lasting efforts to promote education, culture, and infrastructure development, and for championing Latin American unity and international cooperation—principles that are more relevant today than ever. Herrera Campíns died in Caracas on November 9, 2007.

This centennial is not only a moment to remember the life of a former President of Venezuela, but also a time to reflect on the principles of leadership, service, and civic responsibility that he so passionately embodied. His vision and values continue to resonate across generations and borders.

RECOGNIZING REMARKS BY  
UNITED STATES ARMY COLONEL  
JEFFERY R. McGEARY ON MEMO-  
RIAL DAY 2025

**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 2025*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include in the RECORD, remarks given by United States Army Colonel Jeffrey R. McGeary at The Revolutionary War Soldiers Gravesite at Washington Crossing Historic Park on May 25, 2025 for Memorial Day:

A special thanks to the staff and friends of Washington Crossing Historic Park. Thank you, Mr. Alex Robb, for the invitation, and MAJ Garrison for your assistance. To our attendees, I see a lot of familiar faces in the audience, it is great to have you here. I truly appreciate this honor to stand before you all today. I'm a native of Bucks County, born and raised in Newtown (Council Rock High School). I joined the Army to serve my country, at the influence too of my Father who was a proud United States Navy veteran. I thought I would serve my six years and punch out, but here we are over 25 years later and still going strong. Humbled to be here.

There are plenty of other places you could be, but you choose to be here. I salute you.

This year is a special year, as we begin the 250th anniversary events around our fight for independence many years ago and the birth of our great Republic. It's also the 250th birthday of the United States Army!

Memorial Day is a day of national recognition to honor the military men and women who died in service to the United States of America during peacetime and war.

Over the span of 250 years, millions of our fellow citizens have raised their right hand and taken an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. As we re-

member those who fought and died for our country, we remember the Continental Army's battle cry, which is also our theme for the anniversary of our Army's founding "This we'll defend," reminds us that our purpose is clear, ONE MISSION: To fight and win the nation's wars.

We in uniform remain committed to honing our warfighting skills, enforcing standards and discipline, and living the values that have defined Western Civilization in this nation for the past 250 years. On Memorial Day, we reflect on our rich history and legacy of service, sacrifice and dedication. From the Revolutionary War to present-day overseas operations and defending our border right here at home, our service members have consistently demonstrated their resolve to defend freedom at home and abroad.

First observed after the Civil War, Memorial Day was initially called "Decoration Day" because families gathered to remember their loved ones by decorating gravesites with flowers or flags.

This tradition continues across America today. Every Memorial Day, the Soldiers from the Third U.S. Infantry Regiment—the Old Guard—place American flags at every grave marker in Arlington National Cemetery. In proclaiming that first Decoration Day in 1868, General John Logan, National Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, wrote that we should not only remember those "who died in defense of their country," but also, "renew our pledge to aid and assist those whom they have left among us . . . the widows and orphans." This is so true and so important.

We continue to honor those left behind who paid a personal price for us and our Nation. I'm speaking of our Gold Star families.

Would all the Gold Star Family members in the audience please stand.

Allow me to express my appreciation to you on behalf of all those present today and on behalf of our Great Nation. We are humbled by your sacrifice, inspired by your resilience and grateful for your continued service to our communities.

Looking back the first people to die in the service of their country were fighting for what would become the United States of America. They were not the disciplined, professional Army and service members we have today. They were farmers, shopkeepers, teachers and blacksmiths. They all came together to fight for the right to govern themselves and to live free, and to determine their own destiny on God's green earth.

By 1775, the Revolution had been brewing for years. The first shot was fired in Massachusetts in July, and a month later, General George Washington was commissioned as Commander in Chief of the Army. The month after he received his commission, Washington expressed his concerns and frustrations . . .

He'd been at an Army camp in Cambridge for a week. He wrote ". . . we have but about 16,000 effective men in all this department, whereas, by the accounts which I received from even the first officers in command, I had no doubt of finding between 18,000 and twenty thousand 20,000; out of these, there are only 14,000 fit for duty." And getting an accurate count of soldiers wasn't his only problem.

He didn't have the firepower. He didn't have the logistics. He didn't have a command structure.

Yet, with his leadership and determination, he crafted an Army out of disparate militias, haphazard supplies and undisciplined freedom fighters. And with that Army, General Washington marched into battle, in places like Lexington and Concord, and Washington Crossing. In the winter of 1776, right here on these grounds, General Wash-

ington and his ragged Army had experienced setback after setback in the War for Independence. As the harsh Pennsylvania winter set in, the morale of the American troops was at an all-time low. A series of defeats had forced Washington's troops to retreat across New Jersey to Pennsylvania.

On Christmas Day 1776, he crossed right here, his men were freezing yet resilient and determined. They pushed on. And they pushed the British and the Hessians back, right here. They said no more to tyranny. No more allegiance to a Crown halfway around the world. We are patriots, we are Americans. And we will fight and win.

We won the War for Independence, ensuring that citizens today enjoy freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear.

By the end of the Revolution, at least 6,800 American soldiers had given their lives in battle to ensure those freedoms. 17,000 died of disease and nearly 12,000 died while prisoners of war. Over the next few years, more died from wounds sustained during the Revolution.

Many lived long lives with devastating wounds received in those early battles of our Republic.

On Memorial Day, as remember those who first served our country, we remember that, as the American Creed states, they gave their lives and their fortunes for the freedoms we enjoy today. We remember the service of all veterans, throughout the history of our great Nation, who have defended our Constitution and our country at all times, and from all who would threaten it.

I would like to ask all military veterans to rise as we thank you for your service and sacrifice to our Nation. You are my brothers and sisters, and you answered the call when your country needed you most.

I would now like all the veteran spouses and family members to please rise, you know the real sacrifice of a husband or a wife or a son or daughter deployed or overseas. The weeks and months and sometimes years without seeing your loved one, yet you maintain the home front and stand proudly behind your service member. Thank you. A quick special thanks to my wife Lauren, looking back we didn't anticipate this at the time, but we actually had to speed up our wedding—two months after we were married I was in Afghanistan. Army Strong, Army Wife!

From the Revolutionary War to present-day operations, our service members have consistently demonstrated their resolve to defend our sovereignty and freedom at home and abroad.

Our military also stands ready to assist in times of need, such as disaster relief and recovery. We are focused on ensuring that our Armed Forces remain the world's most combat-credible fighting force capable of maintaining peace through strength. One mission: If called upon, to fight and win our nation's wars.

This Memorial Day, remember the common bond we have with the Soldiers and service members who have gone before us, who selflessly served our country and paid the ultimate sacrifice.

We are here today because words like faith, family, country, patriotism, sovereignty and freedom . . . mean something. We are here because as Americans we believe the unalienable—non-negotiable—rights granted to each and every one of us in our founding documents will endure forever in this land of the free and home of the brave.

Tomorrow, on Memorial Day, let us honor and remember our Nation's battlefield heroes. We must remember what they gave for us and honor them this day, and always.

God bless each of you, and God bless our great country—the United States of America.