

As a veteran and former first responder, I know that the research, innovation, and clinical work that the COMBAT Center and MIBH conduct are critical for caring for veterans, active-duty military personnel, and first responders who risk their lives daily for their communities. I am proud to honor the care and medical research being led by the CU COMBAT Center and MIBH and thank them for their service to Colorado and our Nation.

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VETERANS AFFAIRS FRESNO MEDICAL CENTER

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 75th anniversary of the Veterans Affairs Fresno Medical Center and their commitment to providing quality health care and services to Central Valley Veterans.

The official dedication ceremony for the Fresno Veterans Hospital was held on March 19, 1950. This marked the establishment of VA Central California Health Care System's (VACCHCS) primary facility on an 18.5-acre lot in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley.

With the vision to empower veterans through partnership, the hospital partnered with the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Medical School in 1975 to enhance clinical studies and medical training opportunities, this partnership still exists today. Several construction projects were completed from 1981 to 1982 including a new outpatient clinic, 60-bed Geriatric and Extended Care Unit, Milo E. Rowell Auditorium, and Liberty and Education buildings. These new buildings housed numerous new and improved services such as primary care, community development and civic engagement, research and education services, and the Women's Health Program.

In 2008, the Women's Health Clinic moved into their new office on the 4th floor where they continue to support the health and dignity of female veterans. Two years later, the Research and Development Department was established to develop VA scientists and innovations to advance health care practices in hospitals across the Nation. The Fresno hospital's mental health services and capacity were greatly expanded through the completion of the Valor, Freedom, and Independence buildings. Physical medicine, rehabilitation, and prosthetics services were also upgraded in this expansion. Most recently, the Community Living Center (CLC) was built, providing 60 additional beds for veterans that require long-term nursing and rehabilitative care.

Today, more than 41,000 veterans choose to receive their healthcare from the VA Fresno Medical Center. The biggest contributors to the hospital's sustained success are the staff and volunteers dedicated to improving the lives of veterans and their families. They are the reasons the VA Fresno Medical Center has been a staple of the veteran community and the Central Valley for 75 years and counting.

Mr. Speaker, for the past 20 years, I've had the honor of representing the Fresno VA Medical Center in Congress, and it has been a privilege to witness the continued success of

the hospital over the years. I proudly invite my esteemed colleagues to join me to celebrate VA Fresno Medical Center's legacy of quality care. May we continue to support their service to Central Valley Veterans.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DELEGATE BARNIE DAY

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of a colleague and member of the Virginia House of Delegates, Delegate Bernie Day, who passed away on May 12th at the age of 72.

Born in 1952, Delegate Day grew up in North Carolina. An early part of his character development came in high school when Delegate Day started a job working in an aluminum factory for \$1.85 per hour.

After finishing school at the University of North Carolina in 1975, Delegate Day looked for opportunities in journalism. He worked for small newspaper organizations in North Carolina and Kansas City. During this time, he developed a great journalistic acumen.

Southwest Virginia soon became home to Delegate Day and his wife, Debbie. They first moved to Floyd County before settling in Patrick County.

It was in Patrick County where Mr. Day blossomed as a local official and community leader. As county administrator, he strived for the best interests of Patrick County and worked to improve his community.

His service to Patrick County included stints with critical institutions like the First Bank of Stuart Board of Directors, Tri-Area Health Clinic and the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

The people of Patrick County appreciated and praised Mr. Day for his work on their behalf. He earned such high marks that they elected him to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1997.

I served in the state legislature alongside Delegate Day during his two terms in office. He showcased incredible oratory skills and passionate advocacy for rural Virginia. Members of both parties appreciated his storytelling.

Delegate Day's stories often featured "Cornbread", a fictional character whose endeavors served as the building blocks of Day's arguments on legislation.

Given his exceptional verbal skills and mastery of the English language, one Virginia political commentator called him "Virginia's Mark Twain."

The legacy of Delegate Day is to be commended and celebrated by rural Virginians. His life of honorable service and love for helping others made Delegate Day an outstanding figure that future community leaders can look to as inspiration.

HONORING DR. ROSE M.Z. GOWEN FOR SIXTEEN YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Rose M.Z. Gowen for 16 noble years of public service as City Commissioner At-Large "B" for the City of Brownsville, Texas.

Dr. Gowen was elected in 2009 and has served in office since then. In her time as City Commissioner, she has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to public health and improving the quality of life for all the residents of Brownsville.

Dr. Gowen's dedication to promoting healthy lifestyles in our community has not gone unnoticed. Her work has led to many programs which have proven beneficial to the health and wellbeing of our community. These programs include the establishment of the Brownville Farmers' Market and the CycloBia event, which provide nutritious food and exercise through cycling, respectively.

In addition, Dr. Gowen also spearheaded the RGV Challenge, an annual 12-week health initiative which has encouraged massive community change in health and wellness. This in addition to her leadership in advocating for sustainable infrastructure such as the Carcara Trails, which is nearly 430 miles of outdoor trails connecting communities across South Texas.

All these projects highlight Dr. Gowen's loyal commitment to the betterment of our community. Brownsville is lucky to have public servants who display this level of dedication and drive to create positive change in our region. I am proud to represent communities like Brownsville and the wonderful public servants who continue to make it a better place to live.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate Dr. Rose Gowen for celebrating 16 years of public service.

HONORING KIARA D. BURRELL'S SERVICE TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, as Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I rise to honor Ms. Kiara D. Burrell upon the conclusion of her service to the committee as a detailee from the U.S. Secret Service.

Over the course of her 15-year career with the Secret Service, Ms. Burrell has distinguished herself as a dedicated public servant and a strategic leader. Ms. Burrell has led long-term fraud investigations and protective operations in support of dignitaries and major public events. Ms. Burrell has consistently been selected above her peers to coordinate domestic and international visits for several Presidents of the United States and their families. She also served as the Lead Advance Agent for the longest domestic visit involving

several protectees in Secret Service history. More, Ms. Burrell's efforts to improve recruitment of Secret Service agents and her service as a mentor to newer agents demonstrate her commitment to keeping America safe from threats to our national security and to our Nation's leaders.

Since joining the committee over 18 months ago, Ms. Burrell has made valuable contributions to our work by sharing her considerable expertise. She has been a reliable resource to committee staff and significantly advanced our legislative and oversight efforts. During her tenure on the committee, Ms. Burrell played a pivotal role in the preparation for hearings on organized retail crime and transnational repression. Additionally, Ms. Burrell assisted in the development of a package of three bipartisan bills that responded to the testimony received during a Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence hearing.

Throughout her time on the committee, Ms. Burrell has displayed a high degree of professionalism and personal commitment to providing Members of Congress and staff valuable insight and information. Ms. Burrell has demonstrated commendable dedication, enthusiasm, and good humor, which has helped all of us enormously.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I thank Ms. Burrell for her service to the committee and our country, and I wish her the very best as she returns to the Secret Service.

HONORING THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF DAVIS (UUCD)

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis (UUCD) on its 70th anniversary and to commend its unwavering dedication to fostering an inclusive, compassionate, and justice-oriented community. Since its inception in 1954, UUCD has been a beacon of progressive values and community engagement in our Davis community.

Founded by a group of liberal-minded parents seeking meaningful religious education for their children, UUCD was chartered as a Unitarian Fellowship in 1958 and became a Unitarian Church in 1962. Over the years, the congregation has grown to over 300 members, reflecting its welcoming and inclusive ethos. The church's governance reflects its democratic principles, with a seven-member Board of Trustees overseeing operations and legal responsibilities. This structure ensures that UUCD remains responsive to the needs and aspirations of its congregation. The church embraces individuals from diverse faith backgrounds, including Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Humanism, Judaism, Islam, Paganism, atheism, and agnosticism, exemplifying the church's belief that "we need not think alike to love alike."

UUCD's commitment to social justice is deeply embedded in its identity. The church has a legacy of "deeds not creeds," actively engaging in service, projects, educational initiatives, and efforts to foster sustainable living and international understanding. This dedica-

tion is evident through various church teams and groups, such as the Climate Crisis Action Team and the Uniting for Racial Justice Team, which work tirelessly to address pressing societal issues in our community.

In 2003, UUCD was certified as a "Welcoming Congregation" by the Unitarian Universalist Association, recognizing its proactive efforts to include LGBTQ+ individuals. The church's commitment to environmental stewardship led to its designation as a Green Sanctuary in 2006, following a comprehensive initiative to integrate sustainable practices and environmental justice into the church community. In 2017, UUCD declared itself a sanctuary congregation standing in solidarity with immigrant and undocumented individuals.

For seven decades the Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis has exemplified the values of inclusivity, social justice, and environmental responsibility. Its unwavering dedication to creating a diverse and compassionate community serves as an inspiration to all.

Mr. Speaker, it is both fitting and proper that we recognize and celebrate the Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis for its 70 years of invaluable contributions to the community and its steadfast commitment to fostering a more just and inclusive society.

RECOGNIZING MIKE PHILLIPS

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 Mr. Mike Phillips 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. Phillips was a strong advocate for bringing in government and non-profit resources to aid in the recovery process.

It is clear Mike Phillips 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.

RECOGNIZING KAI WEISS

HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kai Weiss for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

Kai has overcome many challenges along his journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Kai, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Kai's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Three Creeks K-8 and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

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

RECOGNIZING CHIEF BRIAN THOLEN ON HIS CAREER AS A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER AND SERVICE TO MINNESOTA

HON. KELLY MORRISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Ms. MORRISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Chief Brian Tholen for his distinguished career in law enforcement and his lifelong commitment to serving the people of Minnesota through education, volunteerism, and public safety advocacy.

For over 25 years, Chief Tholen served with dedication and integrity as a police officer for the City of Edina. He then continued his service as Chief of Police for the South Lake Minnetonka Police Department for three and a half years, leading with courage and professionalism.

A graduate of the University of St. Thomas and the 275th class of the FBI National Academy, Chief Tholen exemplified Minnesotan excellence throughout his law enforcement career. His tenure included a decade in the patrol division, where he served as a field training officer, a defensive tactics instructor, and a member of the Southwest Metro SWAT Team Consortium.

In the past 12 years, Chief Tholen has worked to train officers, paramedics, firefighters, and civilians across the metro area in active shooter response protocol. Through this work, he has emphasized the importance of awareness, prevention, and survival, equipping individuals and businesses with life-saving tools and strategies.

Chief Tholen's service-oriented mindset was shaped early in life. Raised in a family-owned plumbing business, he learned the values of hard work and responsibility by going on service calls with his father as a teenager. He carried that ethic into every aspect of his public service career.

Chief Tholen has retired to Shorewood with his wife of 23 years, Lauren. He is an active member of the Excelsior Morning Rotary and enjoys boating, hunting, traveling, and spending time outdoors with Lauren and their Border Collie, Ike.

On behalf of myself and the Minnesotans who have benefited from his decades of leadership and service, I offer my sincere gratitude to Chief Brian Tholen—and I wish him many more good hikes with Lauren and Ike.

CELEBRATING ARIANA LEON: A CHAMPION FOR LEADERSHIP

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the outstanding contributions of Ms. Ariana Leon, a compassionate leader, dedicated coach, and tireless advocate for authentic leadership. As a Congressional