

RECOGNIZING ROBERT ROSS

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding contributions that Robert Ross has made through his volunteerism with Paul R. Smith Middle School. Mr. Robert Ross exemplifies the spirit of dedication and community involvement at Paul R. Smith Middle School. His unwavering commitment to the school and its programs has made a significant impact on students, staff, and the broader community. Every Friday, Mr. Ross dedicates his time to the Eagle Eyes Program, a vital initiative that fosters a safe and supportive environment for students. His consistent presence and active participation in this program demonstrate his genuine care for the well-being and development of the students. His efforts ensure that the program runs smoothly and effectively, providing a positive influence on the school culture. In addition to his work with the Eagle Eyes Program, Mr. Ross is an invaluable member of the School Advisory Council. His contributions to the council are marked by thoughtful insights and a collaborative spirit. He brings a unique perspective as a parent, helping to bridge the gap between the school administration and the parent community. His input is instrumental in shaping policies and initiatives that benefit the entire school. Mr. Ross's dedication extends beyond regular school activities. He has presented at the Great American Teach-In, sharing his knowledge and experiences with students. This event is a highlight for many students, and Mr. Ross's engaging presentations inspire and educate, leaving a lasting impression on young minds. One of Mr. Ross's remarkable qualities is his ability to reach out to the community to garner support for the school. He tirelessly works to secure donations that benefit both students and staff, ensuring that the school has the resources it needs to thrive. His efforts in this area are a testament to his commitment to the school's success and his belief in the power of community support. Mr. Ross is known for his kindness, respect, and caring nature. Even on challenging days, he remains dedicated to the school and its mission. His positive attitude and unwavering support uplift those around him, creating a nurturing and encouraging environment. Furthermore, Mr. Ross is a strong advocate for parent involvement. He actively supports all parent involvement in evening events, encouraging other parents to participate and engage with the school community. His enthusiasm and dedication help to build a sense of unity and positivity within the school and its surrounding community. Mr. Robert Ross is a cornerstone of the Paul R. Smith Middle School community. His dedication to the Eagle Eyes Program, contributions to the School Advisory Council, presentations at the Great American Teach-In, efforts to secure community support, and advocacy for parent involvement make him an invaluable asset to the school. His kindness, respect, and caring nature inspire others and contribute to a positive and supportive school environment. Mr. Ross's unwavering commitment to the school and its community is truly commendable.

It is clear Mr. Robert Ross 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.

HONORING BOSS SHOE SHINE AND REPAIR: A CORNERSTONE OF THE 75TH STREET COMMUNITY

HON. JONATHAN L. JACKSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a cherished and enduring small business in our community: Boss Shoe Shine and Repair, located at 349 East 75th Street in Chicago.

For over three decades, Boss Shoe Shine and Repair has served as more than just a place to polish and repair footwear; it has been a true anchor on 75th Street, representing the dedication, craftsmanship, and entrepreneurial spirit that defines our local businesses. In an era where quick fixes often supersede quality.

Boss Shoe Shine and Repair stands as a testament to the enduring value of expert service and meticulous attention to detail.

This establishment provides an essential service to the community, helping residents preserve their favorite shoes and boots, ensuring they look their best, and contributing to sustainability by extending the life of cherished items. Beyond the practical services, Boss Shoe Shine and Repair also embodies the spirit of a traditional neighborhood business—a place where customers are known by name, and a sense of community is fostered with every interaction.

Businesses like Boss Shoe Shine and Repair are the backbone of our local economy and the heart of our neighborhoods. They provide vital services, create jobs, and contribute to the unique character of our urban landscape.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating Boss Shoe Shine and Repair for their unwavering commitment to quality, their dedication to serving the community, and for maintaining a business that has been a steady and reliable presence on 75th St.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO NELSON LINE AS HE RETIRES

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Nelson Line as he prepares for retirement after more than 20 years of service to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Over his career, Nelson has been one of the House's most dedicated public servants, serving in multiple positions in the Office of Official Reporters within the Office of the Clerk.

Nelson was born in Hagerstown, Maryland. In 1976, he graduated from South Hagerstown High School. After high school, Nelson attended Hagerstown Junior College and in 1981, he earned a bachelor's degree in Recording Industry Management from Middle

Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

After college, Nelson relocated to the Washington, D.C. area and worked in retail management selling recorded music. He then went on to work for several court reporting firms, including Miller Reporting, Inc.; Susan Talarico and Associates; and Diversified Reporting Services, Inc.

In November 2004, Nelson joined the Office of Official Reporters' committee division as a Production Assistant. In June 2009, Nelson transitioned to the floor operational division of the Official Reporters' Office, working as a Legislative Data Specialist. Nelson was promoted in 2016 to the Systems Analyst position, the most senior position of the Official Reporters' Legislative Data Specialists' team.

Over long hours whenever the House is in session, Nelson's duties include processing Members' submissions for the *Congressional Record*, including Extensions of Remarks, General Leave Statements, and Personal Explanation statements. That includes, Mr. Speaker, more than just a few submissions from yours truly. Furthermore, Nelson is also responsible for the transmittal of the electronic *Congressional Record* to the Government Publishing Office.

Nelson has admirably dedicated 20 years of his professional career to the Office of the Clerk. He has worked under six Speakers of the House: the Honorable J. Dennis Hastert, NANCY PELOSI, John A. Boehner, Paul D. Ryan, Kevin McCarthy, and now, MIKE JOHN-SON.

In addition, Nelson has worked for five Clerks of the House: the Honorable Jeff Trandahl, Karen L. Haas, Lorraine C. Miller, Cheryl L. Johnson, and Kevin F. McCumber. Post retirement, Nelson is looking forward to his next chapter of adventures. He plans to travel, read, spend time with friends, pursue educational opportunities, and invest more time in personal interests.

Nelson is one of the countless hardworking, dedicated professionals who serve behind the scenes to make the People's House function For The People. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, I want to thank Nelson Line for his wonderful service to his country and to wish him well as he begins this exciting new chapter.

RECOGNIZING DR. CHARLES SMITH

HON. BARRY MOORE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Mr. MOORE of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the inauguration of the Sixth President of the University of Mobile, Dr. Charles Smith, who was unanimously elected to be inaugurated on May 1st and has taken charge of leading the university.

Dr. Smith was born and raised in Montgomery before he pursued his PhD at the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in North Carolina. He served for eleven years as Senior Vice President for Institutional Relations and an Assistant Professor of Christian Leadership at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Spurgeon College in Kansas City, Missouri.

Dr. Smith also co-founded the "For the Church" resource platform, offering free online resources for churches across the Nation.

I would like to congratulate Dr. Smith on his inauguration and thank him for spreading the Word of God and serving students at the University of Mobile.

CELEBRATING FAGER'S ISLAND'S
50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ANDY HARRIS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Mr. HARRIS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my good friend John Fager on the 50th Anniversary of Fager's Island. A small business he started with simple grit, determination and the aspiration of living the American Dream.

Fager's Island is an Island personified. It has its own personality and spirit, a living breathing entity created by John Fager and his patrons and employees. People come to Fager's Island to enjoy some of the best moments of their lives professionally and personally. Engagements, Family, the Beauty of the Bay, Food and Drink, Sunsets. It's never nostalgic but grounded in a deep respect for its past, the men and woman who built it into the iconic operation now celebrating its 50th year. Fager's Island creates a deep emotional magic with people. It's the place they have lived their "glory days".

John Fager built Fager's Island. Sheer will, determination, foresight, tape measure, tractor. He is a Laid-Back Trailblazer, a Humble Maverick, An American Patriot. He is years ahead of his time and always evolving, yet forever mindful of the past. He possesses a ferocious work ethic but always still has time for people, a kind word, a warm greeting, a welcome smile. All of the meaningful things about Fager's Island stem from his unwavering code, his devotion to faith, family, people, and his staff.

HONORING KAREN BIERNACKI AND
CELEBRATING THE 35TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF LA PORTE COUNTY
FAMILY ADVOCATES

HON. FRANK J. MRVAN

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and sincere admiration that I rise today to honor Karen Biernacki and her lifetime of service to children and families across Northwest Indiana and to celebrate the 35th anniversary of La Porte County Family Advocates.

In 1990, Karen founded the La Porte County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program to assist abused and neglected children in need of services through the court system. Starting from humble beginnings with a minimal budget, Karen built the foundation of CASA out of her own home, where she trained volunteers to provide essential support to ensure the protection of these vulnerable children. Since its inception, the La Porte County CASA program has trained over 425 volunteers, who collectively spent more than 1.5 million hours advocating for children who suffered abuse and neglect.

Through her meaningful work in the Community, Karen saw the need for a safe and nurturing space for families to reconnect and heal. In 1999, under Karen's leadership, La Porte County CASA partnered with the Swanson Center, a local community mental health agency, to create a safe environment for supervised family visitations. Harmony House served our community for over 20 years, allowing for 56,000 hours of supervised visitation in an authentic setting where family members can cook meals, eat together, and play games. Recognizing the need for greater collaboration and strength in their mission, La Porte County CASA and Harmony House merged their boards in 2004. The organization became known as La Porte County Family Advocates, further enhancing their capacity to serve the community of Northwest Indiana. Although she retired as Chief Executive Officer of La Porte County Family Advocates in 2021, Karen's service to the community continues to serve as an inspiration to us all, and she is worthy of the highest praise.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in honoring Karen Biernacki for her lifelong service to children and families throughout Northwest Indiana and in recognizing the invaluable contributions of La Porte County Family Advocates on their 35th anniversary.

HONORING NAPA POLICE CHIEF
JENNIFER GONZALES

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Napa Police Chief Jennifer Gonzales upon her retirement after 32 years of service in law enforcement. Chief Gonzales' career exemplifies commitment to community, service, and excellence, and her legacy in Napa will continue to inspire future generations.

Born in Santa Clara, California, Chief Gonzales attended California State University, Chico, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Latin American Studies with a minor in Health Science. She later earned a Master of Arts in Behavioral Science, specializing in Negotiation and Conflict Management, from California State University, Dominguez Hills. Committed to continuous professional development, she further honed her leadership skills by graduating from the FBI National Academy, both the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Command College and Sherman Block Supervisory Leadership Institute, and the Executive Leadership Institute at the Drucker School of Management, Claremont Graduate University.

Chief Gonzales began her law enforcement career in 1993 as a Community Service Officer and Dispatcher with the CSU Chico Police Department. She became a sworn officer in 1995, serving in the Chico Police Department for 20 years, and rose through the ranks to the level of Lieutenant. In 2015, she joined the Napa Police Department as Captain and was named Chief of Police in 2021.

Throughout her career, Chief Gonzales has been deeply involved in community service and law enforcement leadership. She has

served on the boards of Nurturing Empowerment, Worth, Safety (NEWS) Napa domestic violence and sexual abuse services organization, the Napa Special Investigation Bureau, the California Massage Therapy Council, and the Women Leaders in Law Enforcement Mentor Committee. She was also appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom to the State of California 9-1-1 Advisory Board. Additionally, Chief Gonzales has been a representative on the Napa County Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, the Child Abuse Prevention Council, the Napa Opioid Safety Coalition, and the Napa Valley Community Leaders Coalition.

Chief Gonzales has also made significant contributions to officer wellness and professional development. As a certified member of the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation team, she traveled to New York City after the September 11th attacks to assist with first responder recovery efforts. She also served as the founding Napa Police Peer Support Coordinator and was a part-time lecturer in the Political Science Department at CSU Chico, where she helped prepare future law enforcement professionals.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Jennifer Gonzales has dedicated her career to strengthening public safety, building community trust, and mentoring the next generation of law enforcement professionals. It is fitting and proper that we recognize her service and leadership here today as she enters her well-deserved retirement.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN CARMAN

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to a true patriot and beloved member of our South Jersey community, John "Ghost" Carman. John recently passed away after an incredibly courageous fight with cancer that began November of last year. John fought until the very end with incredible strength and grace. At the age of 18, John married the love of his life, JoAnn. They shared 47 beautiful years together and raised two children, Cherie and John the third. He was a hardworking man who made his mark in Atlantic City's construction industry, contributing to many of the city's major casino projects. John showed his love for the community by serving in public office, including positions on Egg Harbor Township Committee and Town Board for Municipal Authority. He was devoted to our country, serving most recently as the Treasurer of the American Legion Post in Somers Point, South Jersey. As John's friends and family would say, "to know John was to love him," and he will be greatly missed, but we are eternally grateful for his lasting legacy and love he left behind. God bless John and God bless our United States of America. The greatest country in the world.