

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING JOHN BLAHO

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to recognize Mr. John Blaho for his service at Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative (WREC) and his remarkable role in the Light Up Navajo Project. In May, a courageous team of 16 WREC employees traveled over 1,800 miles to the remote, rugged terrains of Arizona and New Mexico, where they spent two weeks installing vital electrical infrastructure for Navajo families who have lived without power for generations. Their efforts brought light, safety, and hope to communities long overlooked, allowing children to study after dark, families to preserve food, and elders to live with greater comfort. Despite daunting challenges and limited equipment, the WREC team completed a demanding project in just eight days—far ahead of expectations—demonstrating professionalism, humility, and unwavering commitment to this life-changing mission.

The impact of WREC's work goes far beyond electricity; it represents a bridge to connection, opportunity, and the return of future generations to their ancestral homes. The emotional moment when power was turned on for the impacted families—bringing tears of joy and renewed hope—is a testament to the profound difference this project made. WREC's participation in the "Light Up Navajo" initiative reflects not only their technical expertise but also their heart and respect for the people they serve. Their dedication has energized ten homesteads and countless lives, creating a legacy of service that embodies the true spirit of cooperative values. The WREC team's journey inspires us all, proving that with compassion and teamwork, even the most daunting challenges can be overcome to light up lives and communities. I commend the entire team for their efforts on this worthwhile endeavor and for their ongoing service to our local community.

HONORING TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY CHANCELLOR VICTOR BOSCHINI

HON. CRAIG A. GOLDMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Texas Christian University's Chancellor Victor Boschini on his exceptional tenure as TCU'S Chancellor and his transition to Chancellor Emeritus. In his 22 years of service to the university, Chancellor Boschini has been renowned for his dedication to executing TCU's mission Under his guidance, TCU's reputation as an institution for aca-

dem excellence, student achievement, and community has grown considerably. In his new role, he will continue his remarkable career as an educator by remaining involved in teaching, fundraising, and alumni engagement.

Chancellor Boschini helped facilitate several milestones at TCU. In the last few years, he has overseen the completion of 35 new buildings and renovation projects, including the Van Cliburn Concert Hall and the Burnett School of Medicine. He also helped spearhead the \$1 billion Lead On, a fundraising initiative that will impact students at TCU for generations to come. His dedication to excellence has made TCU a hub for academics, athletic achievement, and a significant benefit to the state and country.

In addition to academics, Chancellor Boschini also oversaw incredible athletic success at the university. Since joining the Big 12 in 2012, TCU has won 20 conference championships. In 2022, the TCU Football Team concluded its historic season in the College Football Playoff National Championship. The continuous athletic success has helped bolster TCU to the national stage and has created opportunities for athletes from around the world to play in Fort Worth.

On behalf of the 12th Congressional District of Texas, I am proud to recognize Chancellor Victor Boschini on his exceptional career and leadership at TCU. His work ethic, passion for education, and dedication towards the university will have a lasting impact on the City of Fort Worth. I congratulate him on his spectacular career and wish the best to him and his family.

CONGRATULATING CHANCELLOR JOE GARCIA ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JASON CROW

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Joe Garcia, Chancellor of the Colorado Community College System, on his retirement after more than 35 years of public service. I know I speak for so many in our community when I thank him for the lasting impact he made on higher education in Colorado throughout his career.

Chancellor Garcia oversees a higher education system encompassing 13 colleges, over 35 campus locations, and more than 124,000 students. During his tenure, he launched Bridge to Bachelor's, a statewide transfer program guaranteeing a direct pathway for community college students to four-year universities. He also pioneered Colorado Online, an initiative that expanded online education access for students across Colorado.

Appointed President of Pikes Peak State College in 2001 and later President of Colorado State University-Pueblo, Chancellor Garcia has long advocated for expanding higher education access and student-centered pro-

grams. Through these roles, he also successfully grew enrollment and strengthened public-private partnerships.

In addition to his dedication to improving higher education, he took on several leadership roles throughout his time in public service. Following an appointment by Governor Roy Romer as the Executive Director of the Department of Regulatory Agencies, Chancellor Garcia was appointed by former President Bill Clinton as Regional Director for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. He later served as Lieutenant Governor and the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education. Prior to returning to the Colorado Community College System, he also served as President of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

Throughout his career, he remained committed to advocating for education access, equity, and community development. In 2024, he received the Higher Education Equity Champion Legacy Award from the Colorado Department of Higher Education, recognizing his lifelong impact on equitable access to higher education.

I congratulate Chancellor Joe Garcia on his well-deserved retirement and thank him for his service to the state of Colorado.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DANIEL CLYDE WHEELER

HON. JOHN W. ROSE

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a true public servant. Daniel Clyde Wheeler passed away just over two months ago. Dan Wheeler grew up in the Crab Orchard community in Cumberland County, Tennessee, an area I'm proud to represent here in Congress.

Like myself, Mr. Wheeler grew up on a family farm. That experience led him to become a staunch advocate for our state's growers and producers. In 1965, he started a long career working for the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation, where he served as an agent for Marion County and Sequatchie County. In no time, he was representing an entire region encompassing the Cumberland Plateau and the Chattanooga area of Tennessee.

In 1973, Mr. Wheeler became Assistant to the President and Director of Organization for Tennessee Farm Bureau. By 1980, he took on the role of lobbyist for the Farm Bureau Federation, a role he saw as an opportunity to advocate for his fellow farmers across Tennessee and across the Nation. He later was named Chief Administrative Officer of Tennessee Farm Bureau. His dedication led to him becoming Tennessee's 32nd Commissioner of Agriculture in January 1995. I was blessed to succeed Commissioner Wheeler, who I considered to be a man of great knowledge as well as a personal mentor.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Commissioner Wheeler became a strong voice nationally with regard to tax reform. In our state, he fought to keep taxes low. He fought hard for our state's tobacco farmers. He formed the first-ever Governor's Council on Agriculture and Forestry, an important step that brought key stakeholders to the table. That, I suspect, will be his enduring legacy, bringing growers and producers into the same room as policymakers. That collaboration continues to have a major impact on our state's leading industry, agriculture.

Commissioner Wheeler also served as the Southern United State Trade Association President, where he represented 17 states and territories. He served on the Tennessee Board for Economic Growth and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission. The list goes on.

In 2000, he was named Man of the year in Service to Tennessee Agriculture by Progressive Farmer Magazine.

He helped neighbors outside the agriculture industry as well. He served the Maury County United Way, the Columbia Kiwanis Club, the Maury Regional Hospital Foundation, and the First Farmers and Merchants National Bank of Columbia, Tennessee on their Board of Directors. His life is an example of a life well lived, a life dedicated to others, and a life that truly made a difference.

He leaves behind a wife of 59 years, Carol, and two sons, Jim and David, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

I want to thank Commissioner Dan Wheeler and honor him for his many contributions to our great state of Tennessee.

RECOGNIZING VICTORIA BARLEY

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding contributions that Victoria Barley has made through her volunteerism with Youth and Family Alternatives. For more than 15 years, Victoria Barley has been a remarkable champion for Youth and Family Alternatives (YFA), leaving a lasting legacy that will continue to shape lives for generations to come. Her journey with YFA began at the RAP House youth shelter, where she selflessly volunteered her time to create meaningful opportunities and provide vital resources to support and uplift the youth we serve. Driven by a bold vision, Victoria imagined a large-scale annual event in New Port Richey—one that would not only generate funds for the RAP House but also raise community awareness and engagement with YFA's mission. Despite having no prior experience in organizing a 5k race, her determination and passion quickly rallied a team of dedicated volunteers around her dream. From that vision, the RAP River Run was born. Today, it stands as one of Tampa Bay's premier running events, drawing thousands of participants and volunteers each year. Thanks to the continued enthusiasm and support behind this event, the team is excitedly preparing for the 2025 RAP River Run, scheduled for June 14th in downtown New Port Richey. Through sponsorships, donations, and registration fees, the RAP River Run has raised over \$1 million in

support of the RAP House. Because of Victoria's relentless dedication and can-do spirit, hundreds of runaway, homeless, and foster youth have found safety, stability, and hope during their most difficult times. Victoria Barley's impact is immeasurable. Her heart, her leadership, and her unwavering support have made her a true hero to YFA and to every young life touched by the RAP House.

It is clear Victoria Barley 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.

HONORING RANDALL S.
FERNANDEZ FOR HIS YEARS OF
SERVICE

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Randall S. Fernandez, who is retiring after twelve years of dedicated service as the City Manager of Marysville, Michigan. His unwavering dedication and exceptional leadership have greatly impacted our community.

Mr. Fernandez's tenure as City Manager was marked by numerous accomplishments that have left a lasting effect on the Marysville community. Under his leadership, the city made significant progress in Marysville. He was instrumental in streamlining municipal operations, fostering strong relationships with local businesses, and supporting projects that enhanced the quality of life for Marysville residents.

Prior to his service in Marysville, he also served over 28 years in many governmental positions within the city of Port Huron, Michigan. He began his career as a Community Development Specialist, City Treasurer, City Assessor, Water Office Supervisor, Director of the Downtown Development Authority, and later as General Manager of McMorran Place Sports and Entertainment Center.

Throughout his career, Mr. Fernandez has been known for his problem-solving mindset, collaborative leadership style, and ability to bring people together to achieve common goals. Whether revitalizing downtown spaces or ensuring financial accountability, he has consistently gone above and beyond for the communities he served.

His contributions have also been shaped by a strong academic foundation. Mr. Fernandez holds a Bachelors of Arts degree from the University of Michigan, and a Masters of Arts degree in Management and Supervision with a concentration in Public Administration from Central Michigan University.

Mr. Fernandez's work ethic, experience, and devotion to civic duty have made a profound difference in the lives of countless Michigan residents. His legacy is one of progress, leadership, and a genuine desire to improve his community.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Randall S. Fernandez for his outstanding public service and in extending our best wishes as he embarks on the next chapter of his life.

CONGRATULATING YMCA OF THE
ROSES CEO AND PRESIDENT
LARRY RICHARDSON ON HIS RE-
TIREMENT

HON. LLOYD SMUCKER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor and congratulate Mr. Larry Richardson on his retirement as President and CEO of YMCA of the Roses.

Prior to his time with the YMCA, Mr. Larry Richardson was an educator and football coach. He joined the York YMCA in 1994 during a difficult time for the organization, which has since seen tremendous positive change under his leadership. During his tenure, the York YMCA expanded to include a technology center, the Graham Aquatic Center near Kiwanis Lake, a branch in Shrewsbury, and much more. He also strengthened the York YMCA's impact on housing insecurity and homelessness—a mission exemplified by the affordable housing programs and homeless shelter they operate.

What was formerly known as the York County YMCA merged with the Lancaster County YMCA in 2021 to become YMCA of the Roses. Mr. Richardson was instrumental in this merger. At a time when the Lancaster YMCA was financially struggling, his leadership saved the organization from closure. Since then, the YMCA of the Roses has continued to focus on housing, social responsibility, and healthy living in both York and Lancaster County.

As President and CEO for the YMCA of the Roses, Mr. Larry Richardson has provided an invaluable service to the community. The YMCA of the Roses has transformed lives under his leadership, and I am proud and thankful to have such a strong community-minded organization in Pennsylvania's 11th Congressional District. I wish the best in his well-earned retirement.

RECOGNIZING DELANO, CA

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of Delano, California as it celebrates its 110th anniversary.

Incorporated in 1915, Delano was originally established as a railroad town, serving as a hub for hundreds of workers building the southern terminus of the Southern Pacific railroad. Over the years, Delano has been the site of several historically significant events, particularly during World War II. The Voice of America Delano even operated as a vital broadcasting facility, relaying news and information to VOA stations across the Pacific, including Hawaii, Okinawa, and the Philippines.

In more recent history, the Delano Municipal Airport gained distinction as the home of a squadron of Northrop P-61 Black Widow aircraft—twin-engine fighters that played a key role in defending the Pacific Coast during the war. Today, Delano is best known for its thriving agricultural industry. The city is a major