

Peter DeBiasi's journey with Access began in March 2005, a challenging period marked by high leadership turnover and significant budgetary and staffing hurdles. Yet, it was precisely during this time of adversity that Peter's vision, dedication, and unwavering commitment to serving low-income individuals in Windham and Tolland counties truly shone. Prior to joining Access, Peter honed his leadership skills as President/CEO of the Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies from 1999 to 2002, and as Vice President for Development and Marketing at United Community & Family Services from 2002 to 2005. This wealth of experience laid the groundwork for the transformative impact he would have at Access.

Under Peter's leadership, Access Community Action Agency has experienced unprecedented growth and made profound strides in its mission to empower individuals and families. One of his most significant legacies is the agency's pioneering work in affordable housing. What began with a single senior housing development in Willington, Connecticut has blossomed into a portfolio of over 200 units of owned or managed affordable housing, providing safe and stable homes for countless individuals.

Beyond housing, Peter dramatically improved Access's homeless services. The establishment of a 24/7 emergency shelter in Danielson, coupled with the opening of a cold-weather overnight shelter, has expanded the agency's capacity to offer immediate and vital support to those experiencing homelessness. Furthermore, Access has broadened its focus to proactively prevent homelessness by providing crucial assistance to individuals at risk, underscoring Peter's deep understanding of the complex challenges faced by vulnerable populations. His leadership ensured that Access met the growing need to address homelessness head-on.

The scale of Access's growth under Peter's guidance is truly remarkable. The agency has doubled its workforce to approximately 90 dedicated employees and has seen its yearly budget expand to an impressive \$15 million. This expansion has enabled Access to deliver more comprehensive and impactful services, with affordable housing leading the way in terms of growth. As someone who worked with Peter over many years, I can personally attest to his amazing dedication and passion to achieve the goals of community action. He has a deep understanding of all the policies and criticisms that inevitably would surface over the years and he deftly and pragmatically overcame many difficult challenges. We are very lucky in eastern Connecticut to have benefited from his great work.

As Peter transitions into a well-deserved retirement, planning to relax and enjoy time with family and friends, his impact on Access and the communities it serves will undoubtedly endure. His passion for fighting poverty has been a lifelong commitment, driven by the profound belief that poverty is difficult to experience, but does not have to be permanent. He made his life's work assisting those less fortunate and empowering them to find ways to achieve sustained economic stability.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Peter DeBiasi for his decades of exceptional leadership, unwavering dedication, and transformative contributions. His legacy will continue to inspire and guide Access Community

Action Agency as we strive to build a more equitable and supportive community for all.

HONORING TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S BEACH VOLLEYBALL ON WINNING THE 2025 NCAA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

**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 the TCU Women's Beach Volleyball program on winning the NCAA National Championship Tournament. In a thrilling final, the second-seeded Horned Frogs triumphed over Loyola Marymount University with a 3–2 victory. This historic win not only marks TCU's inaugural national title in beach volleyball but also signifies a shift in the sport's landscape, as TCU becomes the first program outside of USC and UCLA to claim the championship since 2016.

Under the leadership of Head Coach Hector Gutierrez, the Horned Frogs showcased resilience and determination throughout the tournament. Key contributions came from standout athletes Daniela Alvarez and Tania Moreno, whose exceptional performances were instrumental in securing the championship. Before the tournament, TCU won the Big 12 regular season and the conference tournament. This fantastic season is a testament to the dedication of the student-athletes, coaching staff, and the entire TCU community. It reflects the university's commitment to excellence in collegiate athletics and serves as an inspiration to aspiring athletes nationwide.

On behalf of the 12th Congressional District of Texas, I am proud to recognize the TCU Women's Beach Volleyball team for this remarkable achievement. Their hard work and perseverance have earned them a well-deserved place in NCAA history. I am excited to see how this program will continue to grow and proudly represent the University.

RECOGNIZING STEPHANIE WILSON

**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 Ms. Stephanie Wilson for her service at Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative (WREC) and her 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.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF UNITED STATES ARMY VETERAN WALT HARTNETT

**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 12, 2025*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the life of Walt Hartnett, a devoted Army Veteran, tireless advocate, and passionate supporter of Veterans' rights. Walt's unwavering dedication to serving his fellow Veterans and his community left an indelible mark on all those who had the privilege of working with him.

Walt's military career spanned a total of 12 years, including 9 years of active duty and three years in the Army reserves. As an artillery crew member on active duty and a finance specialist during his time in the reserves, Walt's expertise and commitment to service were clear. He deployed to Afghanistan in 2010 to 2011 with the Army Reserves, where he served honorably before being medically discharged.

After leaving active service, Walt continued his commitment to helping fellow Veterans by becoming involved in Veteran organizations, including serving as the Commander of VFW Post 1074 in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania. Walt's leadership extended beyond his post as he also served as District Commander of VFW Pennsylvania District 16. His contributions to these organizations were rooted in his desire to support and uplift fellow Veterans and their families, constantly working to grow membership and expand community outreach.

In addition to his work in the VFW, Walt's passion for supporting Veterans continued in his role as a Veterans Affairs Caseworker for the United States House of Representatives. In this capacity, Walt worked tirelessly to assist Veterans and Servicemembers in navigating the complexities of federal benefits, healthcare, and other issues related to the Department of Veterans Affairs. His work as a caseworker included assisting with student nominations for military service academies and communicating vital information to local Veteran organizations.

Throughout his time in public service, Walt focused on leaving a positive impact wherever he went. His mission was always clear: to support his fellow Veterans, their families, and the communities that supported them. He dedicated himself to making each day better for his fellow Veterans, and his leadership, kindness, and dedication will not be forgotten.

Walt's loss is profound, and it is impossible to overstate the impact he had on the Veterans' community, his colleagues, and his family. A true champion for Veterans, his legacy will live on in the work he did and the countless lives he touched. Walt's commitment to serving his fellow Veterans, his courage in the face of adversity, and his deep love for his community will continue to inspire us all. His memory will forever remind us of the importance of honoring those who serve and making a lasting difference in the lives of others.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize the extraordinary life and service of Walt Hartnett. May his memory continue to serve as a reminder of the impact one person can have on a community, a country, and a cause.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. MICHAEL A. RULLI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 12, 2025*

Mr. RULLI. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 160; YEA on Roll Call No. 161; YEA on Roll Call No. 162; and YEA on Roll Call No. 163.

#### NEWSLETTER FROM CONGRESSMAN CHUCK EDWARDS

### HON. CHUCK EDWARDS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 12, 2025*

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following newsletter to give an update to my constituents on the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, post office disruptions, National Police Week, and Helene recovery.

DEAR FRIEND: Late into the night and in the early hours of the morning, I debated and voted to pass the One Big Beautiful Bill Act on the House floor. This robust package delivers on our promises to working Americans to eliminate tax on tips and overtime, raise child tax credits, and eliminate tax on car loans.

Our historic bill is about restoring a pro-growth, pro-American agenda, and I'm confident that it will accomplish just that by strengthening our national defense, giving our troops a raise, bolstering border security, and reigniting economic growth.

Some are claiming that this bill will provide tax cuts for billionaires and corporations.

The truth of the matter is: \$3 out of every \$4 dollars from the 2017 tax cuts went to individuals, cutting taxes for the lowest-income Americans by 10% while the top 1% saw a cut of less than 0.5%.

This is not a "tax cuts for the rich" bill—it's a "tax cuts for hardworking Americans" bill. Furthermore, this bill provides additional tax relief to senior citizens who have been productive, working members of society

for their entire lives. The bill truly takes a comprehensive approach to make sure that all working-class Americans and families, regardless of occupation or age, can reap the benefits of our big, beautiful bill.

To fix how Washington works, we need to make sure that your hard-earned tax dollars are being efficiently and effectively used, and this One Big, Beautiful Bill will make sure of that.

#### HURRICANE HELENE'S DISRUPTION OF WNC POST OFFICES

Eight months after Hurricane Helene devastated #NC11, several post offices remain inoperable, forcing residents to travel up to an hour to access services.

During the House Appropriations Committee's Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee hearing, I questioned USPS Inspector General Tammy Hull on the status of these post offices. My office will continue to press this issue until services are restored for Western North Carolinians.

#### GETTING OUR FISCAL HOUSE IN ORDER

Interest payments on federal debt currently consume nearly 20% of federal revenue and could rise to 40% by 2035 or 82% by 2054, depending on interest rates.

Even modest interest rate increases could drastically worsen our country's fiscal outlook and limit policymaking flexibility. If we don't get our fiscal house in order, mortgage interest rates will skyrocket for hardworking Western North Carolinians, doubling if not tripling over the next few decades—making homeownership even less attainable for young Americans.

We must take dramatic steps to right the ship before it's too late by cutting unnecessary spending and limiting our country's out-of-control, year-over-year mandatory spending growth that continues to dominate our available capital. As a member of the House Budget Committee, I'm willing and working to take these hard votes and fix how Washington works, so we can get our Nation's fiscal house in order for our children, grandchildren, and future generations to come.

#### HONORING OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS DURING NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

During National Police Week, Americans honored the service and sacrifice of law enforcement officers and their families nationwide.

In the U.S. House, I voted to pass multiple bills that support our men and women in blue:

The Improving Law Enforcement Officer Safety and Wellness Through Data Act requires the Department of Justice to collect data on violence against law enforcement officers, strengthening protections for those who protect us.

The LEOSA Reform Act would allow qualified officers to carry concealed firearms in public, state, or federal properties, making it easier for them to respond quickly to emergencies in public spaces.

The Gold Shield Families Resolution encourages local communities to support non-profit organizations that provide resources to Gold Shield Families during their time of need. Gold Shield Families are families of fallen police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, correction officers, emergency dispatch officers, and emergency service providers.

I am also co-sponsoring the POLICE Act, which makes it permissible to deport any illegal immigrant who assaults a law enforcement officer, and the Uproot Rioting International Students Engaged in Radical Subversion Act (UPRISERS) Act, which would revoke the visa of anyone in the U.S. who engages in violence against a police officer or is convicted of an offense related to rioting.

Our law enforcement officers keep us safe and deserve to be protected through federal policy. I will continue to support legislation that protects those who protect us.

#### MYTH BUSTER: MEDICAID FOR ILLEGALS

In this week's episode of Myth Busters, it's time to shed some light on the myth that illegal immigrants are not recipients of Medicaid.

That is false. The Congressional Budget Office has acknowledged that the budget reconciliation bill would remove at least 1.4 million illegal aliens who are on taxpayer-funded programs, including Medicaid. By removing illegals from Medicaid, we can strengthen those programs for Americans who need them.

#### WNC IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Western North Carolina is beginning to reopen for business and is ready for visitors and customers!

Thank you to all the local leaders, dedicated employees, and incredible volunteers for your hard work to help us get to this point after Hurricane Helene.

In honor of this victory, I am excited to highlight some places that recently opened back up for business.

#### SBA LOANS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Small businesses and private nonprofit organizations in North Carolina who experienced economic loss from Helene are encouraged to apply for the Small Business Administration's economic injury disaster loans.

These loans help eligible small businesses and private nonprofits cover operating expenses following a disaster.

The deadline to apply is June 30, 2025. For more information and to apply online visit [sba.gov/disaster](https://sba.gov/disaster). Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 or email [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov) for assistance.

If you've applied and need additional help navigating the SBA, please visit my website at [edwards.house.gov/services/federalagency](https://edwards.house.gov/services/federalagency) or call my Hendersonville office.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO NC-11'S 2025

#### CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION WINNER

Congratulations to Christina Cannon, the 2025 Congressional Art Competition winner for Western North Carolina!

Her artwork will be displayed in the U.S. Capitol building for one year where visitors from all over can see and admire her talent.

A big round of applause also goes to our runners-up and Facebook Favorite competition winners.

Thank you to all who took the time and effort to participate in the competition and for sharing your gifts to contribute to our community.

With my warmest regards,

CHUCK EDWARDS,  
*Member of Congress.*

#### RECOGNIZING KEVIN VAUGHN

### 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. Kevin Vaughn 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