

During her time in my office, Maria proved to be a committed, thoughtful, and sharp member of the legislative team. With an extensive legislative background, strategic acumen, and a deep understanding of congressional politics, Maria introduced over 20 bills, successfully shepherding four of them into law, including the MEALS Act and two through the Education and Labor Committee. Her impact extends beyond legislative wins as she has effectively coordinated efforts to drive the national conversation on issues like universal school meals, student debt cancellation, and climate justice.

But Maria's skills and fervor go beyond her legislative work. In the past five years, Maria dedicated her free time to volunteering with community organizations to help young adults as they navigated their careers in Washington. Proud of her Armenian heritage, she serves as the President of the Congressional Armenian Staff Association, sharing her knowledge of Capitol Hill and professional development with the next generation of the Hill and uplifting her community every step of the way.

She always goes above and beyond to help people grow in our office as well. She would set aside one day every semester to train our interns on professional development, networking, and the importance of finding their vocation as they continue their journey beyond our internship program. Maria greatly cares for everyone in our office and has no problem going the extra mile in times of need.

Overall, Maria proved to be a reliable member of the team as she extended her hand to help others, warmly greeted new colleagues to help them feel welcome, and played an integral role in brightening our office with her generous puns and laughter.

On behalf of Minnesota's 5th Congressional District, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and thanking Maria for her service. Her contributions to my office and the constituents of the 5th District will forever be remembered and cherished. It was an honor to get to work alongside her to advance a more just world. Maria was an invaluable member of my team and will be missed in the office each day. I wish her all the best in her future endeavors as she takes her talents and skills to the Senate.

RECOGNIZING CODY THOMAS

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. Cody Thomas 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.

TRIBUTE TO ANNA MAE WILSON ROBERTSON

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning with a heavy heart to mourn the recent passing of Private First-Class Anna Mae Wilson Robertson of Milwaukee, a World War II veteran, devoted mother, and a truly revered figure in both our city and our Nation. I extend my heartfelt condolences to her loving family, dear friends, and the many individuals whose lives were touched by her remarkable spirit.

Just a few weeks ago, I had the honor of joining the Speaker of the House, the Senate Majority Leader, the House Minority Leader, and the Senate Minority Leader in a ceremony in Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center to bestow the Congressional Gold Medal on the Women's Army Corps 6888 Central Postal Battalion, in which Mrs. Robertson served during WWII. This was a woman of service to her country, to her community, and to her family. Her impeccable performance deserves to stand the test of time.

Mrs. Robertson's life was nothing short of historic. Born in 1924 in Mississippi, she came into a world marked by segregation and injustice, yet she chose to rise above it all with courage, purpose, and a steadfast commitment to service. After the death of her mother, both Mrs. Robertson and her brother answered the call to service in the midst of World War II. On March 12, 1943, Mrs. Robertson entered active-duty service in the United States Army and was assigned to the Women's Army Corps 6888 Central Postal Directory Battalion, known today as the legendary "Six Triple Eight."

This battalion, composed of 855 pioneering women, was the only all-Black and multi-ethnic unit in the U.S. Women's Army Corps deployed overseas during WWII. Upon their arrival in Birmingham, England, the Six Triple Eight were tasked with sorting through a

daunting backlog of undelivered pieces of mail. These letters and packages represented a vital lifeline between American servicemembers and their families. Facing harsh working conditions and a severe lack of recognition, these women developed an innovative system and cleared the backlog in just three months, an achievement that was three months ahead of schedule.

After the Birmingham backlog was cleared, the Six Triple Eight continued their work in Rouen and Paris, France, where they tackled similar backlogs and ensured that communication between soldiers and their loved ones was restored. In doing so, Private First-Class Robertson and her fellow soldiers lifted the spirits of millions, reminding us that even in war, love and connection endure. Their contributions were critical not only to the war effort but to the very fabric of American morale.

After returning to the United States, Mrs. Robertson and her fellow soldiers of the Six Triple Eight received no welcomes, recognition, medals, or acknowledgment of their service. Both while deployed and returning home, they faced the harsh realities of racial and gender discrimination, segregated housing, separate dining facilities, and unequal treatment. Yet in the face of systemic injustice, Mrs. Robertson remained steadfast in her sense of duty, dignity, and quiet resilience. Her legacy is defined by grace under pressure and strength and resilience amid silence.

After the war, Mrs. Robertson went on to continue her service to the community as a nursing assistant at Wood Hospital, renamed the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center. She also worked for the Milwaukee County Hospital and St. Camillus Health Care in similar positions, caring for the sick. She was widely respected for her compassion, leadership, and tireless dedication to others. Her marriage to John Robertson, which spanned 38 years until his passing in 1983, and her role as a devoted mother to eight children grounded her in love and purpose. Mrs. Robertson drew strength from the deep love she shared with her family, especially her many cherished grandchildren.

I first became aware of Mrs. Robertson's incredible story and that of the Six Triple Eight in 2013 when her family contacted my office for assistance in obtaining her service medals. My staff and I worked with the National Personnel Records Center to verify what awards she should have received. Nearly seventy years after her service, I was honored to present Mrs. Robertson with the Woman's Army Corps Service Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, and the World War II Honorable Service Lapel Button.

In 2021, I was proud to help shepherd the House bill that enshrined her legacy and that of her battalion by supporting the Six Triple Eight Congressional Gold Medal Act, alongside my colleague, Representative Jake LaTurner, finally awarding these heroes the highest civilian honor bestowed by the United States Congress. I had the incredible privilege of awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to Mrs. Robertson's family, honoring her legacy and the sacrifices of the Six Triple Eight. This long-overdue recognition serves not only as a symbol of their valor but as a rectification of justice, restoring to the public record the full measure of their sacrifice, service, and

achievement. Their story is further cemented into our Nation's collective memory through the 2024 American film, *The Six Triple Eight*, which honors the legacy of Mrs. Robertson and her fellow soldiers.

Mrs. Robertson lived over a century, and throughout it all, she exemplified service, humility, and quiet heroism. I am proud to say that Mrs. Robertson and her battalion's service is now secured in our Nation's law and tradition. Mrs. Robertson's life reminds us that the fight for justice does not cease, even when justice is long overdue.

Mr. Speaker, it is for all these reasons that I am deeply honored to pay tribute to this American trailblazer, Private First-Class Anna Mae Wilson Robertson. The people of the Fourth Congressional District, the State of Wisconsin, and the entire United States stand in gratitude for a lifetime of courage and selfless service. Her legacy will continue to inspire future generations, and her story will remain forever etched into the conscience of our Nation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PUBLIC INSPECTORS FOR SAFE INFRASTRUCTURE ACT

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced the "Public Inspectors for Safe Infrastructure Act" with U.S. Representative JULIA BROWNLEY (D-CA) along with U.S. Representatives STEPHEN LYNCH (D-MA) and RASHIDA TLAIB (D-MI). Our bill builds upon the "Safety, Efficiency, and Accountability in Transportation Projects Through Public Inspection Act of 2019," introduced by former Congressman Jose E. Serrano (D-NY).

The "Public Inspectors for Safe Infrastructure Act" would require construction inspections for federally funded highways to be conducted by public employees. Our bill would allow State or local transportation departments lacking sufficient inspectors to contract privately employed inspectors temporarily. Our bill ensures public safety by requiring that all federally funded bridges, tunnels, and roadways are inspected objectively and thoroughly under the highest safety standards. This work can and should be done by skilled, qualified inspectors employed by state and local departments of transportation.

From the delays in building the carpool bridge connecting the San Diego (405) and Costa Mesa (55) freeways to the series of issues that delayed the Bay Bridge, there are numerous examples where outsourcing inspection work to private contractors has undermined public safety, delayed projects, and contributed to cost overruns. Our bill seeks to avoid these potential conflicts of interest, while also mandating public disclosure of any private inspection contracts used by state and local transportation departments when public inspectors are unavailable.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members to join us in cosponsoring the "Public Inspectors for Safe Infrastructure Act." As a senior Democratic member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I filed this bill as amendments to the House's 2015, 2020, and 2021 Highway Bills.

HONORING TAYLOR SHERIDAN ON RECEIVING THE INAUGURAL "TEXAS MADE" AWARD

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 recognize and congratulate Mr. Taylor Sheridan, an esteemed filmmaker and proud Texan, on being awarded the inaugural "Texas Made" award at the 2025 ATX TV Festival.

Mr. Sheridan, renowned for his co-creation of the critically acclaimed TV series "Yellowstone," is now showcasing Texas' rich culture and landscapes in his new production, "Landman." This new creation has captivated audiences and critics alike as it delves into the world of the West Texas oil industry.

"Landman" recently received the inaugural "Texas Made" award. The award, presented in collaboration with Media For Texas, celebrates productions that are deeply rooted in Texas. It honors those who contribute to our state's cultural and economic landscape through authentic storytelling and by creating tangible opportunities for Texans in the film and television industry. "Landman" is certainly worthy of recognition as it creates award-winning film productions in the heart of Fort Worth. This TV series not only highlights the city's vibrant culture, but also creates employment opportunities and stimulates the local economy.

Beyond his cinematic achievements, Mr. Sheridan's commitment to education and community development is evident. He has been recognized with honorary degrees from Texas Christian University and Texas State University, acknowledging his significant contributions to the arts and his efforts in mentoring the next generation of artists and creators.

On behalf of the 12th Congressional District of Texas, I am proud to recognize Mr. Sheridan for receiving this prestigious award. It serves as a testament to his remarkable contributions to both the entertainment industry and the state of Texas. His dedication to authentic storytelling and community engagement serves as an inspiration to many. I wish him and his crew all the best and continued success as they film "Landman" in the Fort Worth area.

RECOGNIZING ALAN SOWERBY

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. Alan Sowerby 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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LORI TRAHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mrs. TRAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for votes on June 10, 2025. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 162 and NAY on Roll Call No. 163.

RECOGNIZING AVA MOORE

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor a tremendous young woman from the Texas 24th Congressional District, Ava Moore.

Ava was an exceptional individual. She was a leader, a patriot, and a bright light in our North Texas community. From the first time we reviewed her application to the U.S. Air Force Academy, it was clear she was destined for greatness. Her academic excellence, leadership, and dedication to serving our nation stood out. That's why I nominated her not once, but twice to the Air Force Academy. The Academy itself recognized her potential and asked her to attend the U.S. Air Force Preparatory School.

Ava successfully completed that program this May, and she was home for just a short break before heading off to basic training and beginning her next chapter at the Air Force Academy. Our staff had spoken with her about her abbreviated summer break and could hear in her voice how excited she was to start a career in service to her beloved country.

While kayaking with friends on Grapevine Lake, Ava's life was taken in a senseless, preventable tragedy. Our entire office is heartbroken about her loss and grieved for Ava's