

projects, expanded health care opportunities and much more. With the formation of SOAR, Bill Estep showed up once again with his iconic yellow notepad and a recorder to get the story right. From day one, he made sure there was an entire section in the Herald Leader featuring the work of SOAR, and he has remained committed to following our progress, our goals and our challenges.

Throughout his career, it has been clear when Bill used his opinion in an effective way, advocating for a larger spread in the urban Lexington-based statewide newspaper to help feature stories in Eastern Kentucky that the rest of the state should care about. I imagine that he didn't win every battle with his editors over the years, but I know that Bill believed in the value of southern and eastern Kentucky for the rest of the Commonwealth. He was bold to ask tough questions, patient enough to listen to the response, and determined to conduct necessary research before writing a story. Upcoming and current reporters should take notes from Bill, and proceed with unbiased questions, an open mind, and a relentless dedication to facts over opinions and click-bait.

Our rural Appalachian region has largely remained in the shadows of Kentucky's bigger cities, playing the national media's role of the impoverished, forgotten people who need a savior. Thanks to courageous journalists like Bill, we have had the opportunity to fight the stereotypes and tell the real story taking place in Eastern Kentucky, where resilient and innovative people are stepping up to shape a brighter future for the next generation through aerospace, medical science, engineering and much more. As Bill begins a new chapter of retirement to focus on his family's story and new traveling adventures, I hope it is filled with great pride in the work he has accomplished and the light of hope that he has helped shine on Eastern Kentucky.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO
AMEND THE NATIVE AMERICAN
TOURISM AND IMPROVING VIS-
ITOR EXPERIENCE NATIVE ACT

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Mr. ED CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act Amendments.

This bill is the House companion to S. 612, introduced by Senators LISA MURKOWSKI, Chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, and BRIAN SCHATZ, Vice Chairman of the Committee. The bill makes important technical corrections to the NATIVE Act to authorize grants to Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations, Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiian organizations for recreational travel and tourism activities.

In 2016, Congress enacted the NATIVE Act to provide grants, loans and technical assistance to Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations, Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiian organizations to assist in developing tourism in indigenous peoples' communities and enhancing opportunities for visitors to learn about indigenous peoples' history, cultures, traditional

foods, languages and arts. Unfortunately, the act did not clearly authorize the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations (ONHR) to issue the grants, which led to implementation challenges.

Our bill corrects this issue by clearly authorizing the BIA and ONHR, along with several other federal agencies, to issue these grants and authorize appropriations for the program. The bill will enable improved access to federal resources, helping these communities build sustainable tourism infrastructure and expand cultural tourism. In turn, it will create jobs and boost economic development in rural and underserved areas.

This bill is especially important for my home state of Hawaii, where the link between tourism and our indigenous people, Native Hawaiians, is essential. Native Hawaiian culture is at the heart of our islands' uniqueness and one of the major draws for those who visit our state.

The past generations have witnessed a great renaissance of the Hawaiian language and culture, and in turn over the ensuing years Native Hawaiian practitioners and culture have become an increasingly visible and central part of our visitor industry. We in Hawaii are committed to fostering this sector of our economy in a way that encourages long-term cultural preservation efforts.

Through improving the implementation of the NATIVE Act, which has helped both Native Hawaiian Organizations and local Native Hawaiian businesses, our federal government will do a better job preserving and promoting Native Hawaiian culture. We can help connect tourists with the rich indigenous heritage of Hawaii through community-based visitor experiences that protect cultural sites, promote education and create jobs.

By enacting the NATIVE Act Amendments, what we have achieved in Hawaii can grow and be replicated nationwide. I urge my colleagues to join with us to support this critical initiative to empower native communities, enhance the tourism sector and create lasting economic opportunities.

Mahalo.

HONORING THE 40TH
ANNIVERSARY OF FLAD

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 40th Anniversary of Luso-American Development Foundation (FLAD). The strengthening historic alliance between Portugal and the United States led to the creation of FLAD in 1985. Its purpose at the time was to strengthen the relationship between our two countries through cultural exchanges and societal transatlantic relationships.

In 1983, the United States and Portugal formed a Cooperation and Defense Agreement. This agreement piloted the establishment of FLAD.

This year FLAD also celebrates its ninth edition of the FLAD Legislators Dialogue, which brings together United States lawmakers of Portuguese ancestry with Portuguese leaders in Lisbon to foster powerful discussions on the strongest path forward to build relations and strengthen our collective security.

FLAD supports the work of Portuguese and Portuguese American students, researchers, scientists, and teachers at the forefront of science, while also facilitating contacts and collaborations with renowned U.S. institutions to build bridges between our two countries and establish new partnerships and possibilities for all generations.

FLAD's work also supports visiting professors at prestigious U.S. universities, such as Fresno State University, Brown University, Georgetown University, and University of Massachusetts Lowell to teach Portuguese Studies with the hopes of increasing Portuguese speakers in the United States. FLAD has been highly successful in promoting internships for American students and facilitating their participation in programs in Portugal.

FLAD has been a principal supporter of Portuguese art and culture by collaborating on numerous initiatives that preserve the presence of Portuguese culture in the United States, allowing exchanges between artists, intellectuals and researchers of the two countries. FLAD's contemporary art collection includes about 1000 works of art from Portuguese artists.

FLAD has continuously partnered with the California Portuguese American Coalition (CPAC) in supporting Portuguese advocacy within California communities. These local communities helped shape the American culture and the economic growth throughout California's Central Valley and nationwide.

Mr. Speaker, as proud descendants of Portuguese immigrants, with the traditions and values from the Azores Islands never far from our hearts, I ask that our colleagues join us in celebrating the 40th anniversary of FLAD and recognizing the contributions of FLAD to U.S.-Portugal relations.

RECOGNIZING THE SHERIFF'S OF-
FICE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES OF CLAY COUNTY

HON. CHUCK EDWARDS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Sheriff's Office and Emergency Medical Services of Clay County.

On September 27, 2024, Hurricane Helene slammed into Western North Carolina, leaving a trail of devastation and destruction. While Clay County was largely spared from the storm's most severe effects, its first responders did not return to business as usual the following day. Instead, the Clay County Sheriff's Office and Emergency Medical Services immediately sprang into action to assist counties in desperate need.

This spirit of service is what makes Western North Carolina truly special. It is exemplified by neighbors showing up in times of crisis, ready to lend a helping hand and stand together during the darkest of days. The Clay County Sheriff's Office deployed officers and resources to Haywood, Buncombe, Avery, and Mitchell counties, providing critical manpower and support to these Helene-affected areas. At the same time, Clay County Emergency Medical Services coordinated efforts to deliver much-needed medical personnel and essential supplies to communities in need.

The Clay County Sheriff's Office and Emergency Medical Services were flooded with donated supplies from area churches, local businesses, and citizens. Once transported to the affected areas, these supplies were received by first responders with great relief and deep appreciation. Let it be recognized and remembered that, in a time of great need, Clay County stood tall—not only for its own residents, but for its neighbors across the region.

RECOGNIZING HANNAH DAVIS

HON. HILLARY J. SCHOLTEN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Hannah Davis. Hannah is a member of Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore, Girl Scout Juliette. She has exemplified extraordinary leadership, innovative problem-solving, and a demonstrated commitment to making a lasting, positive impact by earning the most prestigious award in Girl Scouting, the Gold Award.

Gold Award Girl Scouts are recognized as trailblazers who are willing to tackle the most pressing challenges facing their communities and the world with measurable, sustainable, and far-reaching results. To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, high school-age Girl Scouts must identify and investigate an issue they care about, devise a plan, and then lead a team of experts and community members to implement a project that produces lasting change. Over the course of 1 to 2 years, Gold Award Girl Scouts demonstrate significant initiative, commitment, and leadership, distinguishing them from their peers. Through their resourcefulness and perseverance, they embody the Girl Scout Law to truly make the world a better place.

Hannah's project, "Community Sensory Room", in partnership with Faith Community Church of Coopersville, has greatly improved accessibility resources for individuals with autism, Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). Hannah took action by creating a sensory room at her local church, allowing families and children space to stimulate, engage, or relax senses, which will have a positive impact on our community for years to come.

On behalf of Michigan's 3rd Congressional District, I congratulate Hannah Davis for achieving the highest distinction in Girl Scouts, the Gold Award. I thank Hannah for her leadership and for making such a positive, enduring change in our community.

APPRECIATING WATCHMEN
BROADCASTING

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to recognize Watchmen Broadcasting on 30 years of ministry.

In 1995, Dorothy and Russell Spaulding felt a calling to begin a Christian television station

in Augusta, Georgia. Now, 30 years later they have transformed the ministry from broadcasting locally with 1,000 watts of power to internationally with 150,000 watts of power, increasing potential viewership.

It is through faith that the Spaulding family and Watchmen Broadcasting have helped tens of thousands of people reach Salvation and have prevented more than 8,000 suicides.

Without the generosity of ministries like Perry Stone, Channel 55 in Orlando, and local Networks, Watchmen Broadcasting would not be the meaningful success it is today.

The Spauldings are a true testament to faith; starting with less than one hundred dollars and a hotel room as an office, Dorothy and Russell have touched the lives of many.

Their ministry continues to represent that God uses small beginnings for big impact.

Best wishes and prayers for their continued success in faith and ministry as they continue to influence lives and follow the plan God has for them.

HONORING MR. CHARLES JAMESON

HON. EUGENE SIMON VINDMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Mr. VINDMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Mr. Charles Jameson of Culpeper County, Virginia—a veteran, educator, historian, and lifelong servant to our community.

Although his education, military service and extensive career took him all over, Mr. Jameson, has remained a lifelong resident of Culpeper and still lives across the street from his childhood home.

He began his journey at George Washington Carver Regional High School, where he and many other African American students from Culpeper, Orange, Madison, and Rappahannock counties were educated during segregation.

He went on to attend Virginia Union University before transferring to Virginia Commonwealth University, where he earned his degree in 1970 in pursuit of his lifelong dream of becoming a teacher. However, before he could begin his teaching career, Mr. Jameson was drafted into the U.S. Army and deployed to Vietnam, where he served with honor and distinction. He received advanced artillery training and was awarded for his courage and three Bronze Star Medals, a Purple Heart, and two Army Commendation Medals.

Before returning home, he joined his father, Saint Jameson, in the construction business. When his father retired, Charles took over his role, eventually rising to the position of Project Superintendent and later construction manager. After nearly four decades in the field, he retired in 2010.

In retirement, Mr. Jameson redirected his time and energy into meaningful community service, becoming a driving force behind numerous local initiatives. He worked closely with fellow Carver High School alumni on scholarship programs, served on the boards of the Carver 4-County Museum and the Museum of Culpeper History, and played an active role in organizations such as the Carver Agriculture Research Board, the Culpeper Minutemen, the National Association for the

Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

He also holds a leadership position in the local chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, where he helps organize Culpeper's annual July 4th Patriotic Presentation—an event that honors the region's rich historical legacy. His extensive service and leadership have earned him numerous accolades, including the Culpeper Colonel Award, the MLK Dreamkeeper Award, Aging Together's 5 Over 50 Award, the NAACP Activism Award, and the Neighborhood Watch Amazing Citizen Award.

I want to personally thank Mr. Jameson for his lifelong dedication to service, education, and the preservation of our shared history. Today, he continues that legacy by focusing on his extensive research into African American participation in the Revolutionary War.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in recognizing an extraordinary citizen in my district, Mr. Charles Jameson, for his unwavering commitment to our community.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF THE DES PLAINES
THEATRE

HON. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Des Plaines Theatre, a cherished landmark in the heart of Illinois' arts community. For a century, the Des Plaines Theatre has brought people together through performance, film, and culture, serving as a vital space for artistic expression and civic engagement.

Since its opening on August 9, 1925, the theatre has hosted hundreds of performances, welcomed countless community events, and stood as a gathering place for generations of Illinoisans. Over the years, it has transformed from a vaudeville stage to a movie house and now a fully restored performing arts center. It has endured a fire, undergone multiple renovations, and has emerged stronger each time, continuing to inspire new audiences.

I am proud to congratulate the Des Plaines Theatre on its 100 years of achievement. Its legacy is a testament to the power of the arts to unite communities, celebrate local history, and enrich lives. I look forward to its continued contributions for many years to come.

REMEMBERING WILLIE J.
WATKINS, I

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart, and fond remembrance, that I rise today to honor an impressive insurance professional, prodigious athlete, iconic golf promoter and friend of long standing, Mr. Willie J. Watkins, I. Sadly, Willie transitioned from labor to reward on June 21, 2025. A Homegoing Celebration will be held at 11:00 am on Thursday,