

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2025 CONGRESS-BUNDESTAG/BUNDESRAT EXCHANGE

**HON. MIKE JOHNSON**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2025*

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, since 1983, the U.S. Congress (House and Senate) and the German Bundestag and Bundesrat have conducted an annual exchange program for staff members from both countries. The program gives professional staff the opportunity to observe and learn about each other's political institutions and engage in discussion regarding mutual interest.

A staff delegation from the U.S. Congress will be selected to visit Germany from Friday, November 7 to Sunday, November 16, 2025. During this exchange, the delegation will attend meetings with Bundestag/Bundesrat party staff members, and representatives of numerous political, business, academic and media agencies.

A comparable delegation of German staff members will visit the United States from Saturday, December 6 to Saturday, December 13, 2025. They will attend similar meetings in Washington organized by the members of the U.S. delegation.

The Congress-Bundestag/Bundesrat Exchange is highly regarded in Germany and the United States and is one of several exchange programs sponsored by public and private institutions in the United States and Germany to foster better understanding of the politics and policies of both countries. This exchange is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The U.S. delegation shall consist of experienced and accomplished Hill staff who can contribute to the success of the exchange on both sides of the Atlantic. The Bundestag reciprocates by sending senior staff professionals to the United States.

Applicants should have a demonstrable interest in events in Europe. Applicants need not be working in the field of foreign affairs, although such a background can be helpful. The composite U.S. delegation should exhibit a range of expertise in issues of mutual concern to the United States and Germany such as, but not limited to, trade, security, the environment, economic development, health care, and other social policy issues. This year's delegation should be familiar with transatlantic relations within the context of recent world events.

Please note that there is a significant time commitment aspect for those selected for the program. In addition, U.S. participants are expected to plan and implement the meetings and programs for the Bundestag/Bundesrat staff members when they visit the United States.

Members of the House and Senate who would like a member of their staff to apply for participation in this year's program should di-

rect them to submit a resume and cover letter in which they state their qualifications, the contributions they can make to a successful program and some assurances of their ability to participate during the time stated.

Applications should be sent to the Office of Interparliamentary Affairs, HC-4, the Capitol, by 5 p.m. on Friday, August 8, 2025. Please submit your application and any questions to [interparliamentary.affairs@mail.house.gov](mailto:interparliamentary.affairs@mail.house.gov).

## INTRODUCTION OF THE PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP ACT

**HON. ED CASE**

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2025*

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my Pacific Partnership Act, co-introduced with Congresswoman RADEWAGEN of American Samoa and cosponsored by 21 of our colleagues. A companion version of our bill was introduced in the U.S. Senate by Senator CORTEZ MASTO of Nevada and Senator ERNST of Iowa.

Scattered across the three traditional Pacific subregions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia are over two dozen jurisdictions collectively known as the Pacific Islands, including twelve independent states, countries in free association and territories. Though small in land area and population, the land plus maritime exclusive economic zones of all these jurisdictions combined exceed the land areas of China and Russia combined, comprising a significant part of the vast Pacific Ocean and our Earth's surface.

The Pacific Islands region remains critical to our national security interests in the Indo-Pacific and advises greater U.S. engagement to advance our shared interests and values, particularly in the context of growing geopolitical competition and threats by our shared adversaries to endanger the pursuit of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

To bolster U.S. engagement with this region, we have reintroduced our Pacific Partnership Act, which passed the House unanimously in the 118th Congress. Our bill supports the tenets of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, the guiding framework of the Pacific Islands Forum, the region's premier multilateral organization with eighteen members across Oceania.

Specifically, this bipartisan, bicameral bill would require the President to develop and submit to Congress a Strategy for Pacific Partnership, extend diplomatic privileges and immunities to the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in the hopes that the PIF will establish a mission to the U.S., direct the President to consult and coordinate with allies and partners in the Pacific Islands region and update certain reports regarding transnational crime affecting the Pacific Islands.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation to sustain and expand U.S. engagement in this critical region.

## SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF HUNTER SPANGLER FOR WINNING THE DIVISION III STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE FOR SHOT PUT

**HON. ROBERT E. LATTI**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2025*

Mr. LATTI. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride that I rise to pay a very special tribute to an outstanding high school athlete from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Hunter Spangler, a junior at Liberty Center High School, has represented his school ably on his way to achieving the Division III State Title for Shot Put at the State Track and Field Meet. Hunter overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in his effort to win the title.

In pursuing the State Championship, Hunter defeated his opponents with an impressive personal record throw of 63 feet 1.25 inches. His hard work and dedication, both on and off the field, in achieving this accomplishment is truly outstanding. He has achieved an impressive season, bringing pride to his school and community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Hunter Spangler of Liberty Center High School. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

## RECOGNIZING MATT JANSEN AND HIS SERVICE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**HON. JERROLD NADLER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2025*

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Matt Jansen for over six years of outstanding service in the United States House of Representatives working with the House Judiciary Committee, the House Ethics Committee, and my personal office representing constituents living in the heart of New York City.

I value Matt's hard work, his impressive skill set, and his friendship. He has been by my side when I faced the toughest primary challenge of my career, when we fought together to pass the Respect for Marriage Act into law—ensuring marriage equality for LGBTQ+ families across the country, and to make the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act the law of the land.

Matt has worked for the New York Senate Democratic Conference, as a Legislative Aide in the New York Assembly, and as an intern for New York Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND. Matt's journey on the House side of Capitol Hill began as an intern in my Washington, D.C. office back in 2019. He then moved over to the House Ethics Committee and was promoted to Advice and Education Clerk where

● 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.

he helped respond to questions from Members and staff throughout Capitol Hill. Matt returned to my team as a Staff Assistant and Legislative Correspondent. From there, he embarked on a remarkable career with our office, holding nearly every position—from Staff Assistant to Legislative Correspondent to Legislative Assistant, and even a brief stint as Scheduler—until he ultimately became Press Secretary for both my office and the House Judiciary Committee from 2023 to 2025.

Throughout his tenure, Matt brought an impressive blend of professionalism, creativity, and humor to the role. As Press Secretary, he worked tirelessly behind the scenes, ensuring that my office's messages were clear, concise, and timely. He is an excellent writer and worked quickly to ensure our communications were relevant and far-reaching. He continuously found ways to elevate our communications—from quick video clips to informative electronic updates, to printed newsletters. Matt worked to prepare me for appearances on MSNBC, NY1, and other local New York City television news programs. He worked closely with reporters to book interviews with major news outlets like the New York Times and the Washington Post.

Matt's commitment to learning led him to be an active and consistent participant in the many communications classes offered in the House—even serving as an instructor from time to time. He routinely briefed his Democratic press colleagues on the many Judiciary Committee bills that came to the House floor each week and worked to coordinate the party message on major legislation facing the Congress.

However, his contributions went far beyond just communications. He was always ready to go the extra mile for the team—whether it was accompanying me to events, moderating my town hall, or heading up the Party Planning Committee. His energy was contagious, and his commitment never wavered.

In 2022, Matt took a leave of absence from my official office to be boots on the ground in New York City (NYC) assisting with my reelection campaign. He was a staple at many NYC subway stops, canvassing and connecting with constituents. His hard work and organizing skill helped propel me to a 30-point victory over a fellow Democratic Committee Chair in a tough New York primary.

During his time in my office, Matt made the most of the many experiences available in D.C. From joining me at the White House bill signing ceremony for my Respect for Marriage Act, to escorting Former President Obama during the 2024 Inauguration, Matt was always willing to seize the opportunity.

A proud University Albany alum and Long Islander, Matt brought the New York spirit to our office. Given his love for New York, Matt was always happy to help at events in the district, and I have particularly found memories of marching with him in the New York Pride.

Like many of my constituents, Matt is a frequent visitor to Fire Island Pines, but even a day by the beach won't stop him from creating excellent communications content.

While it's impossible to overstate Matt's loss from my team, I'm glad to know he's staying on the Hill. I look forward to running into him in the Longworth Cafeteria and am excited to see where his career takes him.

HONORING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY  
OF AN AMERICAN HERO, SER-  
GEANT FRANK S. WRIGHT

### HON. JOSH HARDER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2025*

Mr. HARDER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the 100th birthday of an American hero, Sergeant Frank S. Wright of Lodi, California. As one of the last surviving members of the original United States Marine Corps Raiders, Sergeant Wright stands as a living testament to the courage, resilience, and dedication to country.

Born in 1924 in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, Sergeant Wright answered the call to serve his country following the attack on Pearl Harbor. At just 16 years old, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps—using a delayed birth certificate and a clever diet of bananas to meet age and weight requirements. His journey took him through boot camp in San Diego and ultimately led to his selection as one of the original Marine Raiders—a pioneering special operations force whose legacy would later inspire the formation of today's elite Marine Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC).

During World War II, Sergeant Wright served with distinction in the Pacific Theater, including in the battles of Guam and Iwo Jima. He was wounded multiple times in close combat, including gunshot wounds at Iwo Jima, where he witnessed the iconic raising of the American flag on Mount Suribachi. Over the course of the war, he served aboard 11 naval vessels and fought in four major campaigns.

Sergeant Wright's valor is recognized by a host of military decorations, including the Purple Heart with two stars, the Combat Action Ribbon with four stars, the Presidential Unit Citation with two stars, and several campaign and service medals. His commitment to the Marine Corps extended beyond the battlefield—he closed out his military service as a Drill Instructor, shaping the next generation of Marines.

Following the war, Sergeant Wright settled in Lodi, where he has lived for decades as a proud veteran and community member. In 2019, he published his memoir, *Battles in the Pacific*, offering a firsthand account of his wartime experiences. In 2022, he returned to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego for the first time since boot camp, honored by the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Sergeant Frank Wright is a Central Valley treasure and a national symbol of American grit and resilience. I am proud to recognize his lifetime of service and sacrifice, and to celebrate his extraordinary 100th birthday. May his legacy continue to inspire future generations.

CELEBRATING WILLA ROBINSON  
AND THE LEGACY OF WILLA'S  
BOOKS & VINYL

### HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2025*

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life and legacy of Miss

Willia Robinson, the founder and steward of Willa's Books & Vinyl, a cultural cornerstone that has stood for 30 years as a beacon of knowledge, dignity, and Black heritage in Kansas City, Missouri. At 84 years old, Miss Robinson is retiring, but her impact, much like the stories she helped preserve, will live in perpetuity.

Miss Robinson's journey with books began in her hometown, Happy Bend, Arkansas. While attending high school in the town, Miss Robinson's desire to uplift others through books was cultivated when she asked her teacher where she could learn about the contributions of Black people to American life. She was told, plainly and painfully, that there were none. Rather than accept that answer, Miss Robinson began collecting books. Her collection started modestly with a few children's titles in which young Black boys and girls could see themselves reflected in the pages.

After graduating high school at 17, Miss Robinson moved to Kansas City in search of opportunity. She came alone, determined to build a better future, and brought with her a dream to showcase Black literature. In time, she married Cledwell Robinson Sr., raised five children, and worked faithfully for the United States Postal Service for nearly three decades. At the USPS, Miss Robinson learned the rhythms of her community, met with people from all walks of life, and began to share the books she had been collecting since high school.

In 1998, during her time at the post office, Miss Robinson experienced the tragic bereavement of her daughter and granddaughter. Despite the grave loss she experienced, she turned her grief into purpose. Miss Robinson began travelling to Salvation Army locations throughout Missouri, rescuing books that others had overlooked. She first sold them from a table at the post office where she worked, but when new federal building restrictions displaced her, she did not abandon her passion. Instead, Miss Robinson began selling her books as a street vendor at the historic 18th & Vine Jazz District, eventually leading to her permanent storefront Willa's Books & Vinyl, which first opened its doors in 2009.

What Miss Robinson created was more than a bookstore, it was a sanctuary. Now located on Troost Avenue, a road long seen as the racial dividing line between east and west Kansas City, Willa's Books & Vinyl became a living archive of African American history and culture. Inside, one could find rare editions, including works by Frederick Douglass, vintage jazz LPs, 45s of soul music, and early issues of historic Black publications. Her collection eventually grew to over 20,000 works. Ensuring these titles ended up in caring hands was an act of resistance, remembrance, and radical love.

What truly makes Willa's Books & Vinyl sacred is what it represents—a space for conversation, education, and community. For three decades, it has welcomed the curious and the committed. Willa's gave countless young people their first introduction to Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, and other titans of Black literature. The store helped college students, local artists, historians, and everyday neighbors reconnect with the richness of Black thought and scholarship.

In Missouri, Willa's Books & Vinyl holds the distinction of being the oldest and longest-