

church through faith and unity. Now located at 120 Martin Luther King Boulevard, Friendship AME Church remains a testament to perseverance—where, as members say, “The building is historic, but the Church is eternal.”

Under the dedicated leadership of Rev. Darren Thomas, II, the church continues to minister to the spiritual and social needs of its members and neighbors. Pastor Thomas reminds us that the enduring legacy of Friendship AME is rooted in the power of faith, hard work, and unity—a legacy that calls on us all to help build a brighter future for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Friendship African Methodist Episcopal Church for its monumental contributions to faith, education, civil rights, and community uplift. As we celebrate a century and a half years of unwavering service, may we honor its past, embrace its present, and support its mission for years to come.

#### CELEBRATING DJ ROBERTS AND THE LAWSON AND ROBERTS FAMILIES

#### HON. PETE STAUBER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor DJ Roberts, a soon-to-be deputy sheriff from Itasca County in Minnesota's Eighth Congressional District, who will be reclaiming his grandfather Robert “Beefy” Lawson's badge number 703 and carrying forward a legacy of heroic service.

Beefy Lawson was a beloved figure. A Korean War veteran, a talented hockey player and referee, and a deputy sheriff whose charisma and selflessness touched countless lives. He was a pillar of our community. Tragically, he was killed in the line of duty, leaving a void in his family and community.

Inspired by his grandfather's example, DJ Roberts has pursued a path of service with remarkable courage. Despite a dyslexia diagnosis, DJ transitioned from a 20-year career in construction to become a corrections officer at the Itasca County Sheriffs Office in 2018. In 2023, DJ bravely returned to school in his 40s to pursue his dream of becoming a road deputy, overcoming mental, emotional, and physical challenges while balancing fatherhood to four children and his duties as a husband.

Today, we celebrate DJ, known to his late grandfather as “Buddy Guy,” for being honored with Beefy Lawson's badge number as a powerful symbol of his commitment to public safety and a full-circle moment for the Lawson and Roberts family. With resilience, integrity, quiet heroism, and strong faith in God, DJ honors his grandfather's memory, inspiring our community by continuing a legacy of service and sacrifice.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF ISABELLA ZAHN FOR WINNING THE DIVISION III STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE FOR THE 200 METER DASH, 400 METER DASH, AND LONG JUMP

#### HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. LATTA. 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. Isabella Zahn, a senior at Coldwater High School, has represented her school ably on her way to achieving three Division III State Titles for the 200 Meter Dash, 400 Meter Dash, and Girls Long Jump at the State Track and Field Meet. Anna overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in her effort to win the title.

In pursuing the State Championship, Anna defeated her opponents with an impressive time of 23.04 seconds in the 200 Meter Dash, 54.56 seconds in the 400 Meter Dash, and a jump of 18–08.50 in the Girls Long Jump. Her hard work and dedication, both on and off the track, in achieving this accomplishment is truly outstanding. She has achieved an impressive season, bringing pride to her school and community.

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

#### HONORING SCOTT ACONE

#### HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Scott Acone, as he retires from the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Scott first began what would be an extensive career with the New England District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as an intern in 1988. Following the internship, Scott took on a full-time role as a hydraulic engineer with the Water Control Branch, where he performed critical hydrologic and hydraulic analyses for project planning and design, while also taking on the responsibility of managing the New England District's Periodic Inspection Program for dams and hurricane barriers. During this time, Scott became the New England District's expert on ice engineering, responding to numerous ice jam events throughout the 1990s.

In 1999, Scott transitioned to a project management role, where his leadership skills quickly proved to be an asset. As a project manager, and later as Chief of the Military and Environmental Project Management Branch starting in 2010, Scott oversaw several projects that received significant recognition, including the Eastland Woolen Mill Superfund Site, which was awarded both the 2003 National Honor Award for Engineering Excellence from the American Council of Engineering Companies and the 2004 Build America Award for Environmental Remediation from

the Associated General Contractors of America.

In 2013, Scott was promoted to Chief of the Engineering and Planning Division, where he led 140 technical and administrative professionals in planning water resource, environmental, and military projects across New England. Scott was later named Chief of the Programs and Project Management Division in 2016. In this role, Scott oversaw an annual budget of \$500 million in projects across USACE's business lines.

Throughout his career, Scott contributed to many notable projects, including the Elizabeth Mine Superfund Site in Vermont and the Central Artery and Tunnel Stem to Stern Safety Review of the Big Dig Project. Scott's efforts also extended beyond U.S. borders when he provided engineering oversight and review to the Millennium Challenge Corporation for the rehabilitation and raising of the Nacala Dam, an earthen dam in Mozambique, to provide additional clean drinking water to the region.

An engineering professional committed to improving infrastructure throughout New England, Scott is a graduate of the USACE North Atlantic Division's Executive Leadership Development Program and is a member of the USACE North Atlantic Division Regional Management Board and the Society of American Military Engineers. Scott has been awarded several awards recognizing his efforts, including the Joint Civilian Service Achievement Award and the Superior Civilian Service Award.

In addition to Scott's assigned duties and responsibilities with the New England District, Scott volunteered and lent his knowledge and expertise to the USACE's emergency management office to help those devastated in the aftermath of disasters. Scott was deployed many times, including as part of the urban search and rescue team that responded to the 2010 earthquake in Haiti and the urban search and rescue team that responded to Hurricane Katrina. Additionally, Scott assisted the USACE's response team following the attacks on 9/11 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

After three and a half decades of service, Scott will retire from the New England District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the end of June. Scott has diligently served the people of New England, and I wish him many years of well-deserved happiness in retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Scott Acone, and I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing Scott's career and thanking him for his years of service.

#### HONORING STAN BAKER

#### HON. BECCA BALINT

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Ms. BALINT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life and legacy of the Venerable J. Stannard “Stan” Baker, who passed away on June 23, 2025, at the age of 79. A devoted deacon in the Episcopal Church and a pioneering advocate for LGBTQI+ rights, Stan's impact on our Nation and on the Commonwealth of Vermont will endure for generations.

Ordained in 2009, Stan served with distinction as Archdeacon of the Episcopal Diocese

of Vermont and as chaplain to retired clergy. His ministry was marked by compassion, humility, and a fierce commitment to justice and healing. In every community he touched, he brought people together, building bridges of understanding and care.

Before his ordained ministry, Stan excelled as a psychotherapist—co-founding BTR Psychotherapy and serving as a Clinical Director and Mental Health Director—offering vital support to individuals and families facing difficult challenges.

Stan's most enduring legacy, however, is his courageous role in *Baker v. Vermont*. As the lead plaintiff, Stan helped secure Vermont's groundbreaking civil unions law, making it the first state in the nation to grant legal recognition and benefits to same-sex couples. This landmark decision marked a turning point in the struggle for equality—a step so bold and historic that it helped lay the legal and moral foundation for marriage equality across the United States.

So many LGBTQI+ Americans today can trace their right to marry the person they love back to the courage of Stan Baker and his fellow plaintiffs, who stood up at a time when few dared to do so. His action was not only a personal stand but a transformational moment in our Nation's history—one that reshaped the legal landscape and inspired a movement.

His life was also a testament to love and partnership. Stan and his husband, Peter Harrigan, were among the first same-sex couples to enter into a civil union in Vermont—and they later married. Their story reflects both the personal and political progress that can emerge from courage and conviction.

Stan was much more than a public advocate; he was a lover of music, a collector of books and fountain pens, a cello and guitar player, and a person of deep faith and generosity. He is survived by his husband Peter, whose grief is shared by all of us who knew and admired Stan.

Today, we remember Stan Baker—not only for the victories he helped achieve, but for the kindness he expressed, the communities he strengthened, and the hope he inspired.

I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring his memory and recommitting ourselves to the values he embodied: justice, dignity, and love for all. May his life continue to guide us, and may we carry forward his legacy with courage and compassion.

#### CELEBRATING CYPRESS ASSISTANCE MINISTRIES' 35TH ANNIVERSARY

#### HON. MORGAN LUTTRELL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2025*

Mr. LUTTRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend Cypress Assistance Ministries (CAM) on their 35th anniversary. Located within Texas' 8th Congressional District in Cypress, CAM has spent more than three decades serving as a pillar of compassion and hope for families in need. What began in 1990 as a community effort to distribute food to those in need from the back seat of a sedan has grown into a comprehensive non-profit organization that uplifts thousands of Texans each year. CAM currently operates a year-

round food pantry, two donation centers, educational programs, and workforce readiness classes for those who would otherwise not have the opportunity.

In 2024 alone, CAM distributed 1.2 million pounds of food, helped hundreds of households remain in their homes, and guided countless individuals to a path of self-sufficiency through job training. Behind these numbers are real people, parents, seniors, veterans, and children, whose lives are brighter because of Cypress Assistance Ministries. They have demonstrated the very best of what a community can achieve when it works together.

The tireless work of over 500 volunteers as well as over 40 local churches and businesses proves the resiliency and generosity of the people of Texas' 8th Congressional District and serves as an example to the nation. On behalf of a grateful community and the United States House of Representatives, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to Cypress Assistance Ministries on their 35th anniversary and thank them for their enduring service to our district.

#### SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF ANNA ROESSNER FOR WINNING THE DIVISION III STATE TRACK AND FIELD TITLE FOR THE 100 METER DASH

#### HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2025*

Mr. LATTA. 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. Anna Roessner, a senior at Fort Recovery High School, has represented her school ably on her way to achieving the Division III State Title for the 100 Meter Dash at the State Track and Field Meet. Anna overcame the challenges posed by intense competition in her effort to win the title.

In pursuing the State Championship, Anna defeated her opponents with an impressive time of 11.75 seconds. Her hard work and dedication, both on and off the track, in achieving this accomplishment is truly outstanding. She has achieved an impressive season, bringing pride to her school and community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Anna Roessner of Fort Recovery High School. On behalf of the people of the Fifth District of Ohio, I am proud to recognize this great achievement.

#### RECOGNIZING COLONEL HEIDI DEXTER

#### HON. JASON CROW

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2025*

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Heidi Dexter, Commander of Space Base Delta 2, Buckley Space Force Base, as she prepares to move on to her next duty station. I am grateful for her exceptional

service to our Nation and to the Aurora community.

Colonel Dexter has been an outstanding leader during her tenure at Buckley Space Force Base. Under her command, Buckley has made numerous advancements in space operations, infrastructure improvements, and community partnerships. Her dedication to the men and women of Space Base Delta 2 is evident in every action she takes on their behalf.

During her time at Buckley, Colonel Dexter has worked to bolster the morale and well-being of the personnel under her charge. Her commitment to creating a supportive environment does not go unnoticed and has contributed to the readiness and effectiveness of the base.

Colonel Dexter has also been a remarkable advocate for the base within the local community, strengthening ties and ensuring Buckley's integral role in our region. Her engagement with local leaders and citizens has fostered mutual understanding and support.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 6th Congressional District, I extend my deepest gratitude to Colonel Heidi Dexter for her distinguished service and wish her the very best at her next duty station. Her leadership has been instrumental to Buckley's operations and her contributions to our Nation and community will have a lasting impact.

#### REMEMBERING KARANJA AJANAKU

#### HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2025*

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a heartfelt tribute to Karanja Ajanaku, a respected reporter and editor in Memphis, who passed on Tuesday at the age of 70. A native of Natchitoches, Louisiana, who was raised in Kansas City, Dr. Ajanaku came to Memphis in 1977 right after graduating from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Journalism as Leroy Williams Jr. He started at The Commercial Appeal as a beat reporter and was the first Black reporter to cover City Hall for the newspaper. He later became the paper's night news editor and a deputy Metro Desk editor for over 26 years. I first met Karanja, then Leroy, when he covered the general assembly while I served as his state senator. We became friends and visited often and, in the pressroom and in legislative plaza, that friendship continued for the rest of his life. I had and have nothing but the highest respect for his acumen and values. He was a first class reporter and a first class human being. In 1986, he had his name legally changed to Karanja Aidoo Ajanaku, reflecting his cultural sense of self as an agent of change, and was thereafter recognized by his colorful African dashikis. He said his adopted name meant "the guide who puts things in place." He joined The Tri-State Defender newspaper, focusing on the African American community, in 2007, and rose to be its Executive Editor before retiring in 2023. A mentor to many in those newsrooms, Dr. Ajanaku was known for his grace, compassion, patience and dedication to accuracy. The Tri-State Defender, in a statement mourning his loss, said "He was committed to elevating the African American voice in this community