

150 years of exemplary service and to wish them continued strength and success for many years to come.

HONORING W. DOUGLAS HOWLAND
FOR HIS SERVICE

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish Mr. W. Douglas Howland a happy 101st birthday and to thank him for his years of service to his country and his community.

Douglas enlisted after graduating from high school in 1942 and served in the Navy in World War II. For more than 3 and a half years, Douglas served on the aircraft carrier Essex in the Pacific as a radioman on a dive bomber. To this day, Douglas often shares stories of his time during World War II and expresses great pride in having served his country.

Beyond his service to his country, Douglas has been a leader in his community in several ways. Following his time in the Navy, Douglas attended St. Lawrence University, working part time on the railroad to provide for his family. After graduating from St. Lawrence University, Douglas continued to be an active member of his community. From 1962 to 1987, Douglas was a supervisor for the 9th Ward in the City of Watertown. After serving 25 years on the Board of Supervisors of Jefferson County, Douglas became Chairman of the Board in 1984 and was involved in the expansion of Fort Drum. Douglas was also president of the North Side Improvement League in the 1960s, during which he emphasized the value of education which manifested through the important role he played in the establishment of Jefferson Community College. After its establishment, Douglas joined the Board of Trustees for the college.

Douglas is also an active member in the Elks Club, the American Legion, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. At 100 years old, Douglas remains sharp and curious, eager to stay up to date on current events and follow elected officials on both a local and national scale. Douglas has lived an extraordinary and admirable life, always dedicated to serving those around him and being a leader to others.

On behalf of New York's 21st District, I am honored and excited to celebrate W. Douglas Howland's 101st birthday and I thank him for his brave service in the Navy as well as the years of public service that followed.

RECOGNIZING THE BIRTHDAY OF
WILBERT D. PAYNE, JR.

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the birthday of Wilbert D. Payne, Jr. Mr. Payne turned 75 on July 13th.

Mr. Payne was born on July 13, 1950, and has devoted almost 50 years to serving his

community and country, becoming a historic figure in the City of Opelika and a respected voice among Alabama veterans and civic leaders. In 2016, he made history as the first African American elected Chairman of the City of Opelika Board of Zoning Adjustments, breaking barriers and fostering inclusive representation for the citizens of Opelika.

On February 17, 1970, Mr. Payne was drafted into the United States Army at the age of 19, serving with valor in the Vietnam War and later continuing his service through the U.S. Army Reserve and the Army National Guard until his medical retirement in 2004.

As former Commander of the Disabled American Veterans Twin Cities Chapter 95, he spearheaded the Vietnam War 50-Year Commemoration in Central Alabama, organizing the first ceremony of its kind in Lee County in 2016 and ensuring hundreds of veterans were honored and presented with commemorative pins and the public gratitude they had long deserved. He became an advocate for veterans' rights, mental health care, and public recognition for Vietnam veterans who, like himself, returned home without fanfare or acknowledgment.

His civic service roles include: Chief Voting Inspector for Lee County at the Covington Recreation Center, Chairman and member of the City of Opelika Zoning Board, Member of 100 Black Men of America, Inc., Greater Auburn-Opelika Chapter, where he served as All Pro Dad's Chairperson for Carver Primary School and West Forest Intermediate School, Longtime coordinator of the Lions Tamers Social and Civic Club's Family Fun Day/ Juneteenth Celebration, Certified Member and Volunteer with the American Red Cross for 19 years, including service as a former Shelter Manager on the Disaster Action Team (DAT), Board Member of the Greater Peace Church Community Development Corporation, Facilities Coordinator for the J.W. Darden Foundation, Member of the Opelika-Auburn News Editorial Board, Board Member of the Lee-Russell County Council on Aging, Active with People of Action for Community Enrichment and recipient of the Arthur Hill Community Service Award (2023).

Mr. Payne retired from the City of Opelika Engineering Department (1990 to 2000) after previous employment with the Augusta Environmental Company (1981 to 1989) and Diversified Products (1976 to 1980), while balancing his long and honorable military service in U.S. Army (1970 to 1971) and Army Reserve (1971 to 2000). He is supported by his loving wife, BBB4 Wilbert D. Payne, Jr., and has been blessed with 4 children and 12 grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Mr. Payne on this milestone and wishing him a very happy birthday.

RECOGNIZING SPECIALIST
WILLIAMS MARES

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of speaking about Major Steven Mares, and now I want to talk about the bravery of his youngest son, Specialist William

Mares. William is a senior at Central Regional High School, where he serves with distinction as the Cadet Battalion Commander of the school's Junior ROTC program, the Golden Eagle Battalion. Recently, William followed in his father's footsteps by enlisting in the U.S. Armed Forces. He will soon begin basic training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, the very same base where his father trained. After that, he will be stationed in Arizona, the place he was born when his father was based there, a powerful full-circle moment that speaks to the deep military tradition within the Mares family. William has also been accepted to begin advanced individual training at the Defense Language Institute, where he will spend 18 months studying Arabic. Upon completing his training, he plans to pursue a Ph.D. in linguistics and continue his journey in the U.S. Army, proudly walking the same path of service and excellence his father has traveled. William's ambition, discipline, and devotion to his country are truly inspiring, and I have no doubt that his future is bright and filled with purpose. May God bless William and God bless our United States of America, the greatest country on the face of the planet.

RECOGNIZING BECKY KOENIG

HON. RANDY FEENSTRA

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Mr. FEENSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Becky Koenig and congratulate her on her retirement after nearly 40 years in education.

Since 1984, Becky has invested in the education of generations of Iowans across the communities of Sumner, Forest City, Lake Park, and Spencer. Her leadership and dedication to the classroom have left a lasting impact on each student, teacher, and faculty member that has had the pleasure of working, teaching, and learning alongside her.

In addition to teaching, Becky has spent 38 years as a speech coach, guiding students in competition. As a head coach, she contributed to Spencer High School's 50-year streak of sending at least one group to the Iowa All-State Festival.

Outside of the classroom, Becky was known to be a tireless advocate for her fellow educators and students, a true leader. As an Instructional Mentor Coach, she formally mentored many teachers and informally guided countless others with the years of experience and wisdom she accrued.

Becky was one of those educators who had a lasting impact not just on her students' education, but on their lives. Students from the past still reach out to her to chat, grab lunch, and thank her for the role she played in their formative years. She has inspired thousands of Iowans with her work, leaving a legacy that colleagues will look fondly back upon and future educators will look towards as a model for their careers.

As she begins this next chapter in her life, I would like to thank Becky for the incredible work she has done for the state of Iowa—and our great Nation. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Becky Koenig for a remarkable career and wishing her all the best in retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I missed yesterday's votes due to weather delays. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 191; YEA on Roll Call No. 192; and YEA on Roll Call No. 193.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. YUNG PATE, JR.

HON. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life and legacy of Mr. Yung Pate, Jr., a proud veteran, respected professional, and devoted community leader, whose contributions have left a lasting mark on the city of Chicago and beyond.

Mr. Pate answered the call to serve his country during the Korean War, carrying out his duties in the United States Army with honor, courage, and steadfast dedication. His service reflected the strength of character and deep sense of duty that would define the rest of his life.

Following his military service, Mr. Pate built a distinguished career in the security field. Known for his dedication to his clients and employees, as well as his exceptional service and professionalism, he became a trusted and admired figure throughout the region. His work helped shape Chicago's security industry, and his legacy continues to inspire a new generation of professionals, including the hundreds he mentored and employed, to follow in his footsteps and uplift others.

Mr. Pate's commitment to service extended far beyond his profession. Throughout his life, he remained deeply engaged in his community, dedicating himself to public service, mentorship, community engagement, and generosity.

Above all, Mr. Pate was a devoted family man. He is survived by his beloved wife, Mrs. Dolores Thibodeaux-Pate, and the cherished Pate family, who continue to uphold his legacy of service and excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the cherished life of Yung Pate, Jr.

RECOGNIZING NICHOLAS "NICKY" BACSIK

HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend Nicholas Bacsik, an outstanding young man whose hard work and character have earned him the rank of Eagle Scout. For his Eagle Scout project, Nicky designed and built four standing workshop tables at Cloverdale Farms County Park in Barnegat, South Jersey. These tables now complete an outdoor teach-

ing space where children will learn about environmental stewardship and conservation, a legacy that will benefit the community for the years to come. But Nicky's path to Eagle wasn't just about one project. It was about perseverance, leadership, and inner strength. In September of 2023, Nicky faced an unimaginable loss when his older brother, Danny, also an Eagle Scout, was tragically killed while riding his bike at the University of Delaware. The grief was overwhelming, and at one point, it wasn't clear if Nicky would continue his Scouting journey. But he did, and not just for himself. He pressed on with even greater determination, knowing that Danny would have wanted him to reach the milestone. That strength, that resilience, and that sense of purpose is what being an Eagle Scout is all about. I am proud of all that Nicky has accomplished, and even more proud of the man he is becoming. God bless Nicky, and God bless our United States of America, the greatest country on the face of the Earth.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ROBERT L. "BOB" HANLEY

HON. PETE STAUBER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Seaman Second Class Robert L. "Bob" Hanley, the last living survivor of the sinking of the USS *Houston* (CA-30) in the Sunda Strait off the coast of Java on February 29, 1942, ending the storied U.S. Asiatic Fleet.

As one of only 368 of the ship's complement of 1,060 to survive this sea battle, he showcased American grit, tenacity, and commitment in the fight against fascism and tyranny. He endured multiple POW camps, "hell ships" to Singapore and Burma, and slave labor on the infamous Thai-Burma Death Railway.

His nearly four years of as a POW of Japan were marked by starvation, torture, and beatings. As a POW medical orderly, he labored without medicines and supplies to save the lives of his fellow brutalized POWs. He, himself, survived bouts of dysentery, malaria, and pellagra. At liberation in August 1945, he was among just 291 remaining USS *Houston* (CA-30) survivors.

Bob's resilience never wavered, and his service did not end with his Navy discharge in 1947. He continued serving his country by enlisting in the U.S. Army for 15 years. After his military career, he worked in security at 3M for another 15 years, retiring in 1978 due to medical issues caused by his wartime imprisonment.

Throughout his life, Bob's deep faith as a devout member of the Catholic Church of Saint Peter in Forest Lake, Minnesota, guided him through the darkest times and brightest moments, serving as a cornerstone of his strength. On September 12, 2024, Seaman Second Class Robert L. Hanley passed away at 102 years old. May he rest in peace.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF LUCILLE HIRSH HART

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include in the Record the following proclamation celebrating the 100th Birthday of Lucille Hirsh Hart.

Whereas, Lucille Hirsh Hart was born on June 21, 1925, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Lena and Joel Hart, and has spent a century inspiring those around her with her strength, dedication, and love;

Whereas, Lucille built a beautiful life rooted in family, raising four children with devotion and care while serving as an outstanding mother and homemaker;

Whereas, she also dedicated herself to a distinguished career in medical records, ultimately serving as the head of Medical Records at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, a major teaching institution in downtown Philadelphia, where she contributed to the health and well-being of countless patients and supported generations of medical professionals;

Whereas, Lucille has long been an ardent supporter of the State of Israel and the Jewish people, instilling her deep sense of heritage, culture, and commitment in her children and numerous grandchildren;

Whereas, in 1993, Lucille moved to Florida, where she continues to live independently in her own home in Delray Beach, bringing joy, wisdom, and warmth to all who know her;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that I, Lois Frankel, on behalf of the United States House of Representatives, do hereby recognize and celebrate the 100th birthday of Lucille Hirsh Hart.

Let it be known that Lucille's life stands as a shining example of service, resilience, and enduring love for family and community. We honor her remarkable century of life and the legacy she continues to build.

Happy 100th Birthday.

HONORING MR. GREGORY J. ZAGAR FOR HIS DECADES OF SERVICE

HON. ELISE M. STEFANK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Ms. STEFANK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Gregory J. Zagar for his decades of dedicated service with the United States Air Force and the Air Force Research Laboratory in Rome, New York.

In 1974, Mr. Zagar enlisted in the United States Air Force and served until 1982, when after 8 years of service he was honorably discharged, he joined the U.S. Air Force Reserve at Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome, New York, where he would continue to serve at the rank of Captain until 1985. From 1985 to 1996, Mr. Zagar served as part of the New York Air National Guard based at Hancock Field, where he earned the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and returned to the U.S. Air Force Reserve at Hanscom Air Force Base, having achieved the title of Colonel.

Since 2004, Mr. Zagar has served in several leadership positions in the Computing and Communications Division at the Air Force Research Laboratory in Rome, New York. The