

RECOGNIZING THE LAKES PILOTS ASSOCIATION FOR OVER 60 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE GREAT LAKES MARITIME COMMUNITY

**HON. LISA C. McCLAIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 15, 2025*

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the Lakes Pilots Association, on their completion of their new docks and seawall project to preserve the maritime heritage and identity of Port Huron as a Great Lakes port city.

For over six decades, the Lakes Pilots Association has provided expert pilotage services to foreign-flagged vessels operating in the critical waters of District 2. Under the leadership of President Captain Tony Brando, the Association has played a vital role in ensuring the safety of navigation, protecting the environment, and supporting economic activity in the Blue Water Area, including the Port Huron region.

The Lakes Pilots Association is a trusted guardian of our waterways. With a team of 17 highly trained pilots and 9 full-time dedicated employees, the Association is known for its unwavering professionalism, safety, and reliability. Their efforts not only safeguard ships, cargo, and crews, but also help maintain the physical and economic integrity of the waterways they serve.

The Association's contributions extend beyond maritime operations. Through community outreach efforts like the "Touch a Freighter" program, supported in partnership with the local community foundation, the Lakes Pilots Association has fostered public understanding and appreciation of Great Lakes shipping and its importance to our region's heritage.

Their recent investments—including \$1 million in new docks and a seawall—as well as \$3.5 million in new pilot boats, demonstrate a strong commitment to strengthening infrastructure, enhancing operational capacity, and ensuring long-term service to the region.

The Lakes Pilots Association maintains a close partnership with the City of Port Huron and other local harbor stakeholders. Their ongoing collaboration helps preserve the city's identity as a historic port city, enrich its maritime legacy, and contribute meaningfully to its economic vitality.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and immense pride that we honor and thank the Lakes Pilots Association for their decades of dedicated service, commitment to safety and environmental stewardship, and for their indispensable role in sustaining commerce and maritime heritage throughout the Great Lakes region.

HONORING LA LUZ CENTER

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 15, 2025*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor La Luz Center, which is celebrating 40 years of supporting the Latino community of Sonoma Valley. This non-profit

organization has provided a variety of essential services from community engagement, family support, youth education, professional development and more to our Sonoma Valley's most vulnerable families.

La Luz was founded by activist Ligia Booker in 1985, during a time when most of our Sonoma Latino population was composed of seasonal workers who would return to their native countries once the harvest concluded. Originally offering seasonal housing for harvest workers, La Luz has expanded into a beacon of cultural resilience in our Sonoma Valley. The organization now works year-round, serving over 2,000 individuals and families accounting for over 80 percent of the Latino population of Sonoma. La Luz has undoubtedly become a significant resource for families seeking assistance with immigration, small business support and learning development.

While the organization has expanded, La Luz's mission to advance immigrant safety and wellbeing has remained the same. La Luz aids those who are in dire need of human services with immediate support including legal assistance and access to food and health care. In addition to providing emergency services to our vulnerable communities, La Luz also offers resources to our community to increase school readiness of local Latino children. The group supports professional development, offering several trainings and workshops in finance and computer literacy to help our Latino community members thrive.

In 2016, the La Luz Center was rebuilt in the heart of Boyes Hot Springs to be able to provide in-person assistance and host community events. Following its humble beginnings in a shared office space, the new La Luz Center proudly hosts annual events such as Cinco de Mayo, Dia de los Muertos, Noche de Luna and many others for our community to come together and celebrate Latino culture through traditional music, dance and food.

Mr. Speaker, La Luz is greatly appreciated for their 40 years of service to our Sonoma Valley community. Their noble dream of establishing a safe place for new immigrants to receive support remains alive and well in our region to this day. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor La Luz Center here today.

CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF  
REIST POPCORN

**HON. LLOYD SMUCKER**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 15, 2025*

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate and recognize Reist Popcorn Company on their milestone 100th anniversary.

In 1925, a Lancaster County farmer named Alvin Reist founded what would become Reist Popcorn Company. The business grew and then moved to its current, iconic location in Mount Joy Borough in 1937. Through four generations and a century of hard work, Reist Popcorn Company remains the easternmost popcorn processor in the United States. They supply manufacturers, distributors, and concessionaires. Their product can be found in movie theaters and on store shelves. In the

past two decades, Reist Popcorn has expanded their business into transporting grain and meals along the nearby railway and by tapping into the international market. They have also partnered with growers across the country and boosted production in their Mount Joy facility.

Very few businesses can say they have lasted one hundred years, but Reist Popcorn's business has been popping ever since their founding in 1925. I am proud to say that I represent such a hard-working and resilient company such as Reist Popcorn, and I wish them another century of success.

RECOGNIZING SUSAN HARKINS FOR 45 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE LOWER BUCKS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 15, 2025*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding constituent from my district, Mrs. Susan Harkins. It is my distinct honor to celebrate her remarkable 45 years of service with the Lower Bucks County Chamber of Commerce.

Since joining the Chamber in 1980, Susan has been instrumental in supporting business and leadership development in Lower Bucks County. She began her career in the Chamber's front office, supporting groups such as the Golf and Transportation committees and the Miss Bucks County Scholarship Pageant. Over the years, Susan has made contributions as the Outlook publication coordinator, bookkeeper, and Assistant to the President—bringing unwavering dedication and professionalism to each role.

Today, Susan serves as the Chamber's Professional Development Specialist, where she works toward the growth and success of Lower Bucks professionals. Her work with the Leadership Bucks County program, now in its 29th year, has shaped and inspired future generations of community leaders. Through outreach events like The Keynote Morning Meeting, Business Card Exchange, and Young Professionals Summits, Susan has created career development and community building opportunities.

Susan's impact reaches far beyond her formal responsibilities. Her tireless work ethic, meticulous attention to detail, and steadfast support for others have made her a cherished mentor and friend. She has played a vital role in fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members, especially in her contributions to the Chamber's 60th Anniversary Celebration.

Outside of the Chamber, Susan is an Assistant Treasurer of the A. Marlyn Moyer, Jr. Scholarship Foundation, which provides scholarships to high school seniors for their first year in postsecondary education. She also serves as the Secretary for the Bucks County Technical High School Foundation for Education Excellence, supporting both students and staff alike.

For 45 years, Susan Harkins has been a fervent supporter of Lower Bucks businesses—providing education, creating networking opportunities, and championing advocacy on areas impacting business. It is a privilege to celebrate someone who brings enthusiasm, good humor, endless support, and hard work to everything she does. We celebrate Susan on this incredible milestone and thank her for 45 years of remarkable commitment to our community.

RECOGNIZING RASMUSSEN UNIVERSITY FOR THEIR 125TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. ANGIE CRAIG**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 15, 2025*

Ms. CRAIG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Rasmussen University on their 125th anniversary.

Founded in St. Paul, Minnesota, on September 1, 1900, Rasmussen University has spent 125 years building a powerful legacy of opportunity. What began as a small business school has grown into a regionally and nationally recognized institution committed to career-focused education that transforms lives and strengthens communities.

Rasmussen has long served students who are often underrepresented, underserved, or overlooked by traditional higher education—providing the support, flexibility, and access they need to pursue a brighter future. Over the last 125 years, they've helped students prepare for careers that truly matter in health care, business, public service and beyond.

I am proud to represent Rasmussen's Eagan campus, recognized as a national leader in nursing education. They are a Minnesota staple with other locations in Bloomington, Eagan, Brooklyn Park, Mankato, St. Cloud, and Moorhead.

Rasmussen University serves more than 3,000 currently enrolled Minnesotans and has proudly graduated over 28,000 students from across the state.

I congratulate Rasmussen University and I look forward to their continued success.

HONORING 50 YEARS OF SERVICE BY THE RICHMOND-LENOX EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE

**HON. LISA C. McCLAIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 15, 2025*

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Richmond-Lenox Emergency Medical Service (RLEMS) for its remarkable 50 years of unwavering dedication to the communities in Michigan's 9th Congressional District. Operating across cities such as Richmond, Memphis, New Haven, and several townships—including Casco, Columbus, Riley, and Wales—RLEMS has been a cornerstone of public safety and compassionate care.

Since its inception, RLEMS has exemplified excellence in emergency medical services, consistently delivering prompt and professional care to those in need. Their commitment ex-

tends beyond emergency response. They also provide non-emergency medical transportation, a vital service for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities. They have ensured that all members of the community have access to necessary medical care.

Additionally, RLEMS demonstrates a profound commitment to community well-being through its involvement in programs such as the Richmond Township Senior Citizens Program. By offering CPR and first aid courses, they empower residents to assist their neighbors in times of crisis, fostering a culture of preparedness and mutual support.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and immense pride that we honor and congratulate the Richmond-Lenox Emergency Medical Service on its 50 years of service to the local community. They stand as a testament to the enduring spirit of public service. Their contributions have not only saved lives but have also strengthened the fabric of our community. As they celebrate this significant milestone, we express our deepest gratitude and look forward to their continued service in the years to come.

HONORING JUDGE CARMEN BROOKS DRAKE

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 15, 2025*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable servant, Judge Carmen Brooks Drake.

Carmen is a proud native of Adams County and a member of the last historic graduating class of South Natchez High School in 1989. She is married to Reginald Drake, and together they have a beautiful daughter, Shelby.

Carmen earned her undergraduate degree from Jackson State University in 1993, before obtaining her Juris Doctor from The George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C., in 1996.

After law school, Carmen returned to Mississippi to begin her legal career. She served as a law clerk for Justice Leslie D. King at the Mississippi Court of Appeals. She later had the honor of working as a Special Assistant Attorney General under Mike Moore.

When General Moore retired in 2004, Carmen embraced the opportunity to enter private practice in her hometown of Natchez. She credits her mentors—the late, great Judge Patricia Dunmore and Judge Deborah McDonald—for instilling in her the confidence to be fearless in any courtroom, boardroom, or room she enters.

Over the years, Carmen built a dynamic legal career, serving as a Municipal Court Judge, City Attorney, General Counsel for both private and governmental entities, and a dedicated Public Defender. On November 5, 2019, she made history as the first Black person and the first woman elected to serve as Adams County Prosecutor. Three years later, she was elected Circuit Court Judge representing Adams, Amite, Franklin, and Wilkinson Counties—a position she proudly holds today.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Judge Carmen Brooks Drake for her distinguished service and outstanding

contributions to the Natchez, Mississippi community.

RECOGNIZING HELEN BIRKHEAD'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

**HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 15, 2025*

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Helen Birkhead, a remarkable constituent from my district. It is my honor to celebrate her on her 100th birthday—a day marking a hundred years of love, laughter, and commitment to her family, friends, and community.

Born on August 30, 1925, in Trenton, New Jersey, Helen has experienced a century full of changes and milestones. Her life story stands not only as a testament to longevity, but also to unwavering character. Throughout her ten decades of life, Helen has remained deeply committed to her faith and her family, living each day with purpose, grace, and quiet strength.

Helen graduated from Trenton High School, in Trenton, New Jersey. Later, she made her home and spent much of her life in Ewing, New Jersey after marrying her husband, Ken Birkhead. Ken was a United States Navy veteran who went on to serve as an Ewing Township Police Officer and work in construction. As a devoted homemaker, Helen created a warm and loving home where she and Ken raised their two children, Kathy and Kenny. Helen's endless love and support filled her household with everlasting joy.

Beyond her dedication to her family, Helen remained steadfast in her commitment to her faith. Helen is a devout Catholic and was a member of the Incarnation Catholic Church in Ewing, New Jersey. Her Catholic faith has served as a guiding light in her life—shaping her values and offering strength and clarity through life's many trials and triumphs.

Today, Helen enjoys her daily walks and gathering flowers from the community gardens to create beautiful floral arrangements for her suite. A woman of few words, Helen loves sipping a good, hot cup of tea while reminiscing on her past. Helen's ideal way to spend her birthday exemplifies her ability to find joy in life's simplest blessings—attending a quiet luncheon savoring her favorite treat: ice cream.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to please join me in extending our heartfelt congratulations, sincere well-wishes, and all of God's blessings to Helen Birkhead on the celebration of her 100th birthday.

HONORING SGT. JONATHAN K. "DOC" PENEY

**HON. BRIAN J. MAST**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 15, 2025*

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life, service, and ultimate sacrifice of Sergeant Jonathan K. "Doc" Peney, a U.S. Army Ranger, combat medic, and friend