

children safe, and stuck with them all until they were reunited with their families, even while his daughter was entering the emergency room.”

ENDRE GUNTER

Natalie Davis said her family’s world “was turned upside down” when her 13-year-old nephew was shot at the church Wednesday. In a posting on an online fundraising campaign on behalf of Endre Gunter’s family, Davis wrote that the eighth-grader was shot twice while attending Mass.

“It’s impossible to make sense of this act of violence against children, in a place that should have been a sanctuary of peace and safety,” Davis wrote.

“In the face of unimaginable fear and pain, Endre showed strength and faith beyond his years.”

Davis said that before Endre went into surgery, he asked the doctor, “Can you say a prayer with me?”

VIVIAN ST. CLAIR

Despite being shot, 9-year-old Vivian St. Clair remained resilient through the most terrifying moments.

An online fundraising campaign started on behalf of Vivian’s family noted that despite being shot in her back and her arm, she “ran from the church to the school gym, where a police officer scooped her up and rushed her to an ambulance.”

Vivian was taken to HCMC, where her mother works, the posting continued. “Through it all, she continues to smile and radiate sweetness,” the campaign read.

“She’s been telling people how excited she is to swim at her grandma’s pool in Arizona [Thursday] evening with her dad, Joe—just showing how innocent and hopeful she remains.”

DAVID HAEG

A smiling boy with two missing front teeth wears a backpack and a green school uniform polo smiles on what appears to be his front stoop.

Six-year-old David Haeg has undergone surgery and has more days ahead being cared for in a hospital pediatric intensive care unit, according to an online fundraiser started on behalf of his family.

“His road to recovery will be long, but he is showing incredible strength and resilience,” the online posting read. “In the midst of this unimaginable time, the last thing David’s family should have to worry about is mounting medical expenses.”

ASTORIA SAFE

On Thursday while visiting a memorial at Annunciation, Astoria Safe, 10, placed a stuffed animal on a display for one of her friends, Harper Moyski, who was killed in the attack. A shot grazed Astoria on the forehead, and a bullet fragment was lodged there. Doctors deemed it too dangerous to remove but said it wouldn’t cause long-term problems.

Astoria told a reporter she’s feeling OK. She also described how she helped pull two other kids down next to her when the bullets started flying.

“I had two buddies side by side, and I just pushed their heads down to make sure they were safe,” she said. “I thought it was fireworks, it was just crazy. And the smell was terrible.”

RONALD AND SUZAN WILSON

Ronald Wilson, 87, and Suzan Wilson, 82, of Richfield, were among three adults who were wounded in the Aug. 27 gunfire at Annunciation, their family confirmed Tuesday. An online medical update from over the weekend written by a daughter has been read more than 5,300 times as of midday Tuesday. It notes that Ronald Wilson came away with

a minor cut on his head. Suzan Wilson, however, suffered serious injuries to her head from shrapnel.

“As my parents . . . enter this later stage of life, my siblings and I have lovingly and constantly been reminding them to make safe choices like not getting on ladders or shoveling the walk,” Jenny Harding wrote. “Unfortunately, on Wednesday August 27th, being at mass at Annunciation Church turned out to be unsafe.”

Harding went on to share that “my mom walked to the ambulance herself while noticing all of the ‘big strong police officers’ giving comfort to children everywhere she looked. My dad comforted one of the injured children in the ambulance on the way to the hospital.”

A member of the Wilsons’ family said Tuesday they were not ready to share more about the couple.

Louis Krauss of the Minnesota Star Tribune contributed to this report.

I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

### CORDELE WATERMELON

#### HON. EARL L. “BUDDY” CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a Georgia town that has earned itself an unusual title, Cordele, Georgia.

Georgia’s agricultural staples are widely known as peanuts, pecans, and peaches; but Cordele has become a major producer of another crop: Watermelon.

This central-Georgia town plays an impressive agricultural role within the state, with a population of just under 10,000, it boasts a massive contribution to the region’s agricultural production of cotton, peanuts, and oddly enough watermelon.

Southern Living magazine just named Cordele, Georgia as the Watermelon Capital of the World, yes you heard that correctly.

This town produces a plethora of summertime fruit, supplying much of the state and the Southeast region with a sweet, refreshing treat to beat the heat.

Cordele also hosts the Watermelon Days Festival which invites thousands of visitors each year.

Today, we congratulate the town of Cordele on being recognized for another agricultural contribution of the state of Georgia, and the title “Watermelon Capital of the World”.

### TRIBUTE TO MASTER SERGEANT LESLIE DIANE KOGER

#### HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Master Sergeant Leslie Diane Koger on her retirement after 29 years of distinguished service in the United States Air National Guard. MSgt Koger’s career is one defined by professionalism, leadership, and selfless service. From her beginnings in South Carolina to her final assignment at Joint Base Andrews, she has embodied the highest

traditions of military service that leaves a legacy on the Airmen she has led and mentored.

A proud native of Moncks Corner, South Carolina, MSgt Koger graduated from Macdonia High School before embarking on her military career in July 1996 when she enlisted in the South Carolina Air National Guard’s 169th Fighter Wing, 245th Air Traffic Control Squadron. After completing her technical training as an Information Manager at Keesler Air Force Base, she quickly distinguished herself as a talented leader and mentor. Over the years, she advanced through key roles at the squadron, group, and headquarters levels, serving with distinction at McEntire Joint National Guard Base, the Pentagon, and the Air National Guard Readiness Center at Joint Base Andrews.

Throughout her career, MSgt Koger deployed seven times in support of Operations Southern Watch, Iraqi Freedom, and Freedom Sentinel, as well as multiple Air Expeditionary Force deployments and exercises. Her leadership was instrumental in earning her unit the Meritorious Unit Award, and her administrative teams were consistently recognized for exceptional service in deployed environments. She also played a critical role in preparing the next generation of Airmen, mentoring countless service members who have gone on to leadership positions themselves.

MSgt Koger’s commitment to professional growth is reflected in her academic and military accomplishments. A graduate of Limestone College, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems Management, she also completed numerous levels of professional military education. Her exemplary service has been recognized with some of the Air Force’s highest honors, including the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Air and Space Commendation Medal, and the Air and Space Achievement Medal with three oak leaf clusters. She was named South Carolina Air National Guard Non-commissioned Officer of the Year in 2004, an early recognition of the leadership and excellence that would define her entire career.

Her most recent assignments—as Assistant Executive Assistant for Intelligence and Cyber Effects Operations at the Air National Guard Readiness Center and as Executive Assistant to the Air National Guard Command Chief at the Pentagon—underscore the trust placed in her judgment, discretion, and leadership at the highest levels of the Air National Guard. In these positions, she supported directorates and leaders responsible for the readiness of Air National Guard units across all 54 states and territories, directly impacting the mission success of more than 90 Air Guard wings nationwide.

Mr. Speaker, as MSgt Leslie Diane Koger concludes her service at the end of 2025, we honor her for nearly three decades of dedication to our Nation. She has been a leader, a mentor, and a role model whose example continues to inspire and will for years to come. On behalf of a grateful state and Nation, I thank her for her service and wish her Godspeed in her well-deserved retirement.

RECOGNIZING MR. COLE McANANY  
FOR HIS ACHIEVEMENT IN THE  
MATH OLYMPIAD

**HON. LLOYD SMUCKER**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate and recognize Cole McAnany from the Ephrata Area School District for achieving a perfect score in the prestigious Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary and Middle Schools.

A middle school student in the 11th Congressional District, Cole's accomplishment embodies the educational excellence found in Lancaster County. After competing in the Math Olympiad since he was in 5th grade, Cole was confident in his ability to score big. His hard work in and out of the classroom paid off, placing him among an elite group of just 201 students who also achieved a perfect score. He is in the top two percent of his peers.

Cole represents the high caliber of students in Pennsylvania's 11th Congressional District. His dedication and remarkable abilities reflect his willingness to strive for excellence in everything he does. I congratulate him on this impressive achievement and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING TAYLOR "TAY CHEESE"  
AKHARUME

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable contributions of Ms. Taylor "Tay Cheese" Akharume—a dynamic performer, visionary artist, and Mississippi native whose vibrant talent and trailblazing spirit have left an indelible mark on the world of entertainment.

Born in the heart of Mississippi, Tay Cheesy has risen through the ranks not by following the well-worn paths of the industry, but by forging her own. With deep roots in cities like Nashville, Baton Rouge, Memphis, and Jackson, each place has shaped and enriched her creative expression, culminating in a signature style that is bold, authentic, and electrifying.

Tay Cheesy's journey is one of grit, vision, and fearless determination. While others waited for opportunity, she created her own—eschewing traditional industry gatekeepers to build a name for herself on her own terms. Her raw talent and relentless work ethic have earned her coveted collaborations with legendary artists such as Willie Clayton, Uncle Luke, Grammy Award-winner Jon Batiste, West Love, and Cupid.

Yet, Tay Cheesy is more than just a performer. She is a choreographer, creative director, motivational speaker, and cultural ambassador whose work uplifts and inspires. Her performances are not simply artistic displays; they are storytelling in motion—celebrations of resilience, joy, and empowerment. With each step, she moves audiences and amplifies the voices of those too often left unheard.

In an industry that often demands conformity, Tay Cheesy stands out as a beacon

of authenticity. Her journey speaks to the power of self-belief and the impact of creating space for others to shine. Through her creativity and purpose-driven leadership, she continues to pave the way for future generations of artists to dream beyond boundaries.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Taylor "Tay Cheese" Akharume for her outstanding contributions to the arts, her unwavering dedication to her craft, and her enduring commitment to representing Mississippi with brilliance, pride, and purpose.

RECOGNIZING THE GEORGIA NEW  
IVIES

**HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two esteemed universities in Georgia.

This year, Forbes Magazine introduced a list of 2025 "New Ivy" league schools.

The list highlights 10 public and 10 private institutions across the country that are at the Ivy-League-level of prestige.

Because of their academic rigor, competitive admissions, and strong career outcomes, Georgia Tech University and Emory University stood out.

Georgia Tech is renowned for its innovation and return on investment.

Their recent graduate career placement rates consistently hover above 90 percent, which is an impressive figure.

Emory has earned praise for its research programs and global health initiatives, with a history of groundbreaking medical discoveries.

One of these discoveries includes the first successful bone marrow transplant in a human patient.

The recognition cements both schools as academic powerhouses—and proves Georgia continues to rise as a destination for elite higher education.

We should all be proud of both universities for this tremendous accomplishment.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT  
OF COLUMBIA NATIONAL GUARD  
HOME RULE ACT

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia National Guard Home Rule Act, which would give the mayor of the District of Columbia control over the D.C. National Guard. Representative JAMIE RASKIN is the co-lead of this bill in the House, and Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN is the sponsor of this bill in the Senate.

The governors of the states and territories control their National Guards while the president controls the D.C. National Guard. This bill would give the D.C. mayor, who knows D.C. better than the president, the same control over the D.C. National Guard that the governors of the states and territories have over their National Guards. The president would

have the same authority to federalize the D.C. National Guard that the president has to federalize the National Guards of the states and territories.

The attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, the events at Lafayette Square on June 1, 2020, and the current deployment of the D.C. National Guard in D.C. are prime examples of why the D.C. mayor should control the D.C. National Guard. During January 6th, the D.C. National Guard was not deployed to the Capitol for several hours, likely costing lives and prolonging the attack. At Lafayette Square, the D.C. National Guard forcibly removed peaceful protestors. Currently, the D.C. National Guard is deployed in D.C. in response to a crime emergency declared by President Trump.

Not only does presidential control over the D.C. National Guard violate D.C. home rule, it also may create a loophole in the Posse Comitatus Act, which limits the military's involvement in civilian law enforcement. The Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel has opined that when the D.C. National Guard is operating for non-federal purposes, even though it is an exclusively federal entity, it may be used for civilian law enforcement without violating the Posse Comitatus Act.

In the 117th Congress, the House passed this bill as part of the fiscal year (FY) 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and the FY 2023 NDAA.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING THE LIFE OF AUREO  
IVAN CARDONA

**HON. RITCHIE TORRES**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 2, 2025*

Mr. TORRES of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Aureo Ivan Cardona, a proud son of Puerto Rico and a tireless champion for the South Bronx.

Born in Arecibo and raised in Hunts Point, Aureo dedicated his life to building community through housing, youth sports, and public service. He helped rebuild the Bronx after the fires of the 1970's, served as the youngest District Leader in New York City, and led with compassion as president of the South Bronx Housing Corporation and Chairman of the Sports Foundation.

His work extended far beyond our city from supporting Cuban refugees in Florida to empowering underserved communities around the world. Through it all, Aureo remained deeply grounded in faith, family, and service.

He leaves behind a legacy of justice, creativity, and love and a Bronx that is stronger because he called it home.

May his memory be a blessing.