

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE 2025 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS OF SOUTH DAKOTA

HON. DUSTY JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, each year, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes a select group of schools across the country, celebrating their academic achievements and contributions to educational excellence. As a South Dakotan, I am proud of Howard High School, Jones County Middle School, and Warner Elementary School for being named as National Blue Ribbon Schools by the South Dakota Department of Education.

Howard High School is recognized for their outstanding achievement in English and mathematics, Warner Elementary for their strong graduation rate and attendance, and Jones County Middle School for supporting students in overcoming barriers to succeed in English, mathematics, and attendance.

Outstanding teachers and a supportive community are key to the success of each of these Blue Ribbon Schools. It is paramount that we continue to have exceptional teachers and schools for our kids and the future of our Nation. Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating these three exceptional schools in South Dakota. I am confident they will continue making great contributions to our future leaders.

HONORING THE CAREER AND SERVICE OF MR. DEXTER BRIM

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the career and service of Mr. Dexter Brim, a lifelong resident of Canton, Mississippi, who has dedicated more than a decade to educating and mentoring young people in his community.

For 11 years, Mr. Brim has taught history with passion, purpose, and a steadfast belief that "All students are capable of learning." Through his instruction, he has earned the respect of his students, colleagues, and community, building a reputation for excellence and commitment. His leadership recently came full circle as he joined the administration team at Nichols Middle School, the very school he once attended. As he has said, "Serving in this capacity is not only a professional milestone but also a deeply personal privilege. I am proud to give back to the community that shaped me and to help lead the next generation of learners with dedication, heart, and a deep sense of purpose."

Mr. Brim is a proud graduate of Jackson State University, where he earned both a

bachelor's degree in social science education and a master's degree in education, and of Arkansas State University, where he completed a specialist degree in educational leadership. His preparation reflects both his dedication to lifelong learning and his vision for strong, student-centered leadership.

His record of accomplishment is extensive. He has been honored as a STAR Teacher and was named Teacher of the Year in 2019, 2022, and 2024. He was also recognized for his role in significantly improving student proficiency on the U.S. History assessment—a testament not only to his skill as an instructor but also to his conviction in his students' ability to succeed.

Beyond the classroom, Mr. Brim has been a mentor, role model, and active contributor to the Canton community. His work demonstrates that education is not just about academic success but also about character, confidence, and community pride.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Dexter Brim for his leadership, service, and commitment to education. He represents the very best of Mississippi's educators and continues to embody the values of hard work, service, and community that define our state.

RECOGNIZING LARRY NEWMAN'S 40 YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE YARDLEY-MAKEFIELD FIRE COMPANY

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with deep admiration and appreciation to recognize a truly outstanding individual from my district—Volunteer Firefighter Mr. Larry Newman from Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

This year, Mr. Larry Newman is celebrating 40 remarkable years of continuous service with the Yardley-Makefield Fire Company.

Larry's story began long before he ever put on the uniform. As a young child, he would visit the firehouse with his grandfather, who himself was a proud volunteer firefighter. Those early memories and experiences sparked a love for firefighting that never seemed to fade.

After graduating from St. John's University in Queens, New York, in 1969 with a degree in Business and Marketing, he pursued a successful 30-year career in men's fashion. Yet, the call to serve his community never left him. In 1975, he answered that call by joining the Floral Park Fire Department as a volunteer firefighter, which would only be the start of his overall 50-year journey in fire service.

In 1986, after relocating to Yardley, Pennsylvania, Larry joined the Yardley-Makefield Fire Company, where he has served ever since.

Throughout his 40 years with the Yardley-Makefield Fire Company, he has stepped into

a variety of roles—most significantly his 29 years serving as President of the Fire Company. His leadership has helped shape the growth of the department to ensure it remains prepared and stays connected to the community it serves.

Larry's impact goes beyond his leadership roles. He has written many successful grants that have helped the Fire Company purchase equipment, such as a High Water Rescue Truck, which has allowed the department to be able to respond more effectively.

He has been frequently honored as a Top Responder, answering more than 400 fire calls in a single year, a testament to his strong dedication. Whether responding to emergencies or representing the Fire Company at schools during Fire Prevention Week and at community events, you will often find Larry behind the wheel of a firetruck, always ready to serve.

Larry Newman's life is a powerful example of what it means to live with purpose. His record of duty, sacrifice, and selflessness embodies the very best of the American Spirit.

On behalf of a grateful community, I offer our deepest appreciation to Larry Newman for his 40 years of extraordinary service. May his legacy of leadership, heart, and heroism continue to inspire future generations of firefighters and public servants for years to come.

I congratulate Larry. We salute him.

HONORING THE WADAAG COMMONS PROJECT

HON. ILHAN OMAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Wadaag Commons Project in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood of Minneapolis. "Wadaag" is the Somali word for "sharing," and this principle is reflected in the design of this building. The project, constructed and owned in partnership with the BIPOC and woman-owned developer Nawal Noor, was planned and crafted in close collaboration with the community. Getting input from those whose lives are most impacted by this development was central to the vision that shaped its final form.

The Wadaag Commons Project is the sixth and final phase of the Seward Commons redevelopment effort, which has transformed the neighborhood from a desolate industrial park into a high-density, transit-oriented housing and commercial area serving diverse incomes. I was proud to secure \$1.8 million in federal Community Project Funding to help facilitate the success of this crucial endeavor.

Beyond its value to the surrounding community, this project is invaluable to those who will call it home. Wadaag Commons provides affordable housing to large families and those experiencing homelessness. The 39 new units include homes with income-based pricing and

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Section 8 voucher commitments to address the burden of rising rent. Several other units have more than two bedrooms to meet the needs of multigenerational households, which has been an option long missing from the local housing landscape.

One of the most notable features of this project is the inclusion of indoor and outdoor play areas for children, facilities that are too often overlooked in affordable housing developments. Alongside these play spaces are private entrances, accessible layouts, and culturally relevant design elements all chosen to support daily life, connection, and communal care.

Please join me in recognizing the residents, advocates, and partners who made Wadaag Commons possible.

WELCOMING ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

HON. KATHERINE M. CLARK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to warmly welcome the spiritual head of the Eastern Orthodox Church, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, to Washington, D.C.

The longest-serving Archbishop of Constantinople in the history of Christianity, the Ecumenical Patriarch will arrive in the United States this month to receive the distinguished Templeton Prize. This prestigious award will be presented in recognition of his "pioneering efforts to bridge scientific and spiritual understandings of humanity's relationship with the natural world, bringing together people of different faiths to heed a call for stewardship of creation."

Guiding the world's 300 million Eastern Orthodox Christians since his election in 1991, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has been a powerful voice for our common responsibilities to one another—our shared obligation to defend the freedom, dignity, and wellbeing of our neighbors and of future generations.

I am especially grateful for the impact his leadership has had on Orthodox Christians across the United States, particularly the more than 600 families at St. Demetrios Church in Weston, Massachusetts. For decades, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has had the deepest respect of the American people and of this institution—an abiding admiration reflected in Congress' decision to award him the Congressional Gold Medal in 1997.

Today, the Ecumenical Patriarch continues to bring together people of all faiths in the pursuit of peace, mutual respect, and a future more worthy of our children. I join my colleagues in commending his invaluable work, and I proudly join my Orthodox constituents in welcoming him back to the United States.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ABRAHAM J. HAMADEH

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and unable to be present for the following vote.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 224, on Passage of H.J. Res. 104.

HONORING BOB NEWHART

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and legacy of Bob Newhart, TV star and comedian.

In 1972, The Bob Newhart Show premiered and catapulted Bob into a new tier of critical acclaim, adoration, and commercial success. Known for its dry humor and heart, The Bob Newhart Show drew millions of viewers into a Chicago-based story about a psychologist and his clients and friends. With incredibly strong ratings and significant praise, the show ran for six seasons, leading to his other acclaimed show, Newhart. Through these efforts, Bob connected with homes and families through his extraordinary storytelling skills. He was described by coworkers and friends as kind, funny, and intellectual, and is remembered as humble and warm despite his fame.

Before reaching comedic stardom, Bob graduated from Loyola University Chicago with a bachelor's degree in business management. He then served two years in the Army during the Korean War and held jobs in accounting prior to recording the comedy album that won him Album of the Year at the 1961 Grammys, "The Button-Down Mind of Bob Newhart". Bob had a love of philanthropy and used his comedic talents to emcee at various benefits from childhood cancer to Scleroderma research. He was adamant about using his career and success for the benefit of others and showed the world how important that mission was to him by raising \$350,000 for the National Children's Cancer Society.

Bob was a true Chicagoan and proved that through the exposure he gave the city in his show as well as his enthusiastic support for the Cubs. The city is proud to honor his life and legacy through renaming the street by the Edgewater condominium to "Bob Newhart Way". Thanks to him, this building is one of the most recognizable in Chicago, appearing in The Bob Newhart Show's opening credits for 142 episodes.

The city of Chicago and the whole country have lost an incredible figure who shaped modern comedy and sitcom TV, and he will be dearly missed. His legacy lives on through his children, grandchildren, and friends, and he will be remembered by the lives that he touched through his work and philanthropic efforts. I am forever grateful to Bob for shining a light on this incredible city and showing us it means to be a true legend.

HONORING CLAY COUNTY FLAGS FOR HEROES

HON. AARON BEAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on September 11, 2025, the Rotary Club of Orange Park Sunrise will once again raise "Flags for Heroes," a moving sea of hundreds of American flags honoring the men and women who lift our communities every day.

In Clay County and across Northeast Florida, we remember the lives lost on September 11, 2001, and we salute the heroes who still answer the call: first responders, service members, veterans, teachers, nurses, and the quiet volunteers who serve without fanfare. Each flag carries a name, a story, and a promise that we will never forget.

I commend the Rotarians, sponsors, and families who make this commemoration possible, and I invite neighbors to walk among the flags, reflect, and thank a hero in their life. America is strongest when service is celebrated, and sacrifice is honored.

I thank the Rotary Club of Orange Park Sunrise for reminding us of who we are. Let's go get them.

REMEMBERING WILLIAM E. "BILL" BALLOU

HON. MICHAEL GUEST

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of William E. "Bill" Ballou. Bill was dedicated to sharing the Gospel and will be remembered for his love of family and his service to his "Heavenly Father."

Bill was born April 8, 1939, in Sterling, Texas, and he later attended Baylor University where he met his wife, Avonnell Bolton. God blessed Bill and Avonnell with 52 years of marriage—a marriage that was focused on Christ and their family of two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Bill was a devoted Baylor alumni and sought to give back to the University that not only gave him an education but also brought Avonnell into his life. Bill served as a lifetime member of the Baylor Alumni Association, was a former member of the Baylor Development Council, and endowed a scholarship in a memory of Avonnell at the School of Education.

Bill will always be remembered for his dedication to sharing the message of salvation through Christ. Bill served Christ passionately with his lifetime of service in churches in Texas, Mississippi, and Georgia. Bill also served in leadership positions in multiple Baptist Associations and led revivals as far away as New Zealand.

One of Bill's favorite passages to use when sharing the gospel was John 14:6: I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Bill left a strong, Godly heritage to those who will walk this Earth after him. I am honored to remember his lifetime of service, and I am thankful for the incredible family he leaves to carry on his legacy.