

HONORING HIS ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW OF CONSTANTINOPLE

**HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and spiritual leader of over 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. I am honored to welcome him to Washington, D.C.

Born Demetrios Arhondonis in 1940 on the island of modern-day Gökçeada, Turkey, His All-Holiness Bartholomew was elected in October 1991 as the 270th successor to the Apostle Andrew, who founded the Church of Constantinople nearly 2,000 years ago. His formal office is the Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch, a historic title dating to the sixth century.

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew studied theology around the world, including at esteemed schools in Turkey, Italy, Germany, Greece, and Switzerland. His doctoral dissertation, submitted to the University of Athens, was in the field of Canon Law, and he was a founding member of the Society of Canon Law of the Oriental Churches. For nearly three decades, His All-Holiness served the Church in many capacities, from his ordination as a deacon in 1961 and priest in 1969, to Assistant Dean at the Theological School of Halki, Metropolitan of Philadelphia, and later Metropolitan of Chalcedon, before becoming Patriarch.

He has received dozens of honorary doctorates from leading universities around the globe, including Georgetown, Yale, Athens, Thessaloniki, Louvain, and Moscow, and is fluent in multiple languages.

As the primary spiritual leader of the Orthodox Christian world and a transnational figure, the Ecumenical Patriarch has exceeded the traditional scope of his office. His All-Holiness advocated for Christian unity, participating in meetings with numerous Church and State dignitaries, addressing national parliaments, and speaking to the European Parliament, the United Nations, UNESCO, and the World Economic Forum. He has led and contributed to reconciliation efforts between Christian Churches through theological dialogues, bilateral consultations, and personal encounters to address issues of common concern.

Furthermore, his faith-led work has led to international meetings and theological conversations with Muslim and Jewish leaders to promote interfaith tolerance on a global level.

He has convened historic synaxes of Orthodox Primates and presided over the 2016 Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, the first such gathering in over a millennium. He restored the independence of churches long suppressed under persecution and, in 2019, granted autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

Through his vision, courage, and devotion, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has led as a beacon of faith, unity, peace, and reconciliation in our time.

HONORING THE DOMTAR MARLBORO MILL

**HON. RUSSELL FRY**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. FRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Domtar Marlboro Mill in Bennettsville, South Carolina, which since 1990 has been a cornerstone of economic growth, innovation, and community service.

As the last greenfield paper mill built in the United States, it employs more than 300 workers, contributes over \$800 million annually to the regional economy, and produces essential paper and pulp products used across the Nation.

The mill has earned recognition for its commitment to safety, efficiency, and responsible forestry, while also investing in Marlboro County through scholarships, service projects, and support for local organization.

The Marlboro Mill stands as a source of pride for South Carolina's 7th District, and I commend its workforce and leadership for their lasting contributions to our state and country.

RECOGNIZING THE SPIRITUAL HEAD, ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Spiritual Head and leader of the second largest Christian Church in the world. His All-Holiness is visiting Washington, D.C. in conjunction with his acceptance of the distinguished Templeton Prize in New York City—an honor previously bestowed on Mother Teresa, the Dalai Lama, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, among others. While here, he will visit both the White House and the Congress.

Elected in October 1991 as the 270th Archbishop of the 2,000-year-old Church founded by the Apostle Andrew, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew is the spiritual leader of 250 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. He is also a leading figure in the dialogues among the Abrahamic Faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—and his presence in our Nation's capital is an opportunity to highlight the positive role religious leaders of his stature bring to the cause of peace and religious liberty.

The true peacemakers of history not only sought to reduce conflict but also showed compassion toward those who persecuted them. Patriarch Bartholomew fits that definition precisely. Despite facing harassment by foreign governments and attacks by extremists, he has remained steadfast in his mission to promote reconciliation, environmental stewardship, and human dignity.

His contributions have been recognized around the globe. In 1997, he was awarded the Gold Medal of the United States Congress. The Guardian identified him as one of the world's foremost leaders in raising environmental awareness. And Time Magazine, in its

category of Leaders and Revolutionaries, named him one of the world's most influential people.

Mr. Speaker, as we welcome His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Washington, D.C., let us also celebrate his unwavering commitment to interfaith dialogue, peace, and religious liberty. His leadership serves as a reminder of the power of faith to unite people across nations and traditions.

COMMEMORATING THE VISIT OF PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

**HON. ANDY HARRIS**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. HARRIS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Head of the second largest Christian Church in the world, Orthodox Christianity.

Patriarch Bartholomew will be in Washington, D.C. to visit both the White House and Congress. His All-Holiness will then travel to New York City to accept the distinguished Templeton Prize, which "celebrates pioneers of scientific and spiritual insight for their contributions to human well-being and spiritual prosperity."

I would like to thank Patriarch Bartholomew for his spiritual work and wish His All-Holiness the best of luck in continuing to serve as a model for the Orthodox Christian community of Maryland's 1st Congressional District.

RECOGNIZING THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

**HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor The Pew Charitable Trusts, an incredible organization that is focused on improving and invigorating civic life. Founded in 1948, The Pew Charitable Trusts has been advancing solutions to societal challenges for 77 years, and I know that the Philadelphia community has benefited immensely from this important work.

Founder Joseph Newton Pew and his wife, Mary Anderson Pew initially focused their philanthropic work on anonymously providing grants to priorities such as cancer research, the Red Cross, and a pioneering project to assist historically Black colleges. Over the years, this institution has evolved into a much more expansive enterprise, allowing flexibility to engage in a variety of community issues and inform the public on responsible governance.

A tireless champion for social good, The Pew Charitable Trust has remained committed to the civic life of Philadelphia and the importance of an informed democracy. This endeavor, inspired by Joseph Newton Pew's vision, stands as a testament to this organization's enduring impact on our city.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of their unwavering commitment to serving others, we honor The Pew Charitable Trust.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY  
OF HERMAN BLACKMON, SR.**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Herman Blackmon, Sr., an extraordinary man whose service, intellect, and compassion enriched the Bay Area and beyond.

Born in Houston, Texas, Herman spent his early years there before serving three years in the United States Air Force. Following his military service, he made the Bay Area his home, earning a Bachelor's degree in Economics and a Master's in Business Administration from the University of California at Berkeley.

In the late 1990's, Herman served as both council member and mayor of Hercules, California. His leadership was defined by tireless dedication to his community, championing Capital Improvement Programs and advocating for equitable educational opportunities for economically disadvantaged students. As managing partner of his family-owned business, Amanco, Inc., he was instrumental in the rebuilding of several West Contra Costa Unified School District campuses, including Coronado, Riverside, Sheldon Elementary, and Pinole Middle School.

Herman's professional career also included 13 years with Pacific Bell. Yet, beyond his many accomplishments, he was a man of diverse passions—an avid reader, skilled mechanic, and enthusiastic player of dominoes and pinochle. Above all, he cherished time spent with his grandchildren; Jhana, Mark, Aleah, Charles-Justin, Langston, Levi, and Winter.

Herman is preceded in death by his beloved wife of 54 years, Peggy, and is survived by his sons Herman, Jr., and Marcus, his seven grandchildren, and a wide circle of friends and neighbors whose lives he touched through his good deeds.

Herman Blackmon, Sr. leaves behind a profound legacy of public service, civic leadership, and devotion to family. His impact will be felt for generations. I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to Mr. Blackmon's loved ones. I know they and the people of Contra Costa County will join me in celebrating his life and legacy.

HONORING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE BROAD IN DOWNTOWN  
LOS ANGELES**HON. JIMMY GOMEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the 10th Anniversary of The Broad in Downtown Los Angeles.

Since 2015, The Broad has expanded public access to a diverse collection of contemporary art for Angelenos and visitors from around the globe. Founded by philanthropists Edythe and Eli Broad, the museum offers free general admission to all visitors so they can explore their collection of more than 2,000 pieces of art and gain a newfound appreciation for modern art work.

Through its permanent and special exhibitions, The Broad has remained committed to uplifting the voices of artists of unique and diverse backgrounds, such as Jean-Michel Basquiat, Takashi Murakami and Julie Mehretu. The museum's commitment extends to its Diversity Apprenticeship Program, where the museum prepares its participants with the knowledge and experience they need to pursue a profession in the arts.

As part of The Broad's mission to increase access to contemporary art, the museum also hosts The Broad Art Foundation, an innovative lending library which has loaned artwork to museums worldwide over 9,000 times. The library seeks to build strong relationships with fellow institutions built on a shared appreciation for the arts that allows them to share their resources and continue expanding access to meaningful artwork.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 10th Anniversary of The Broad.

WELCOMING HIS ALL-HOLINESS  
BARTHOLOMEW I OF CONSTANTINOPLE  
TO THE UNITED STATES**HON. JAMIE RASKIN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, this week, the United States Congress and our Nation's capital will be honored with a visit from the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All-Holiness Bartholomew I. Patriarch Bartholomew is not only the denominational leader of 300 million Eastern Orthodox Christians worldwide—he is a global spiritual leader who has advanced the sacred causes of peace, interreligious understanding and environmental stewardship.

Patriarch Bartholomew is stopping in Washington, D.C. on his way to New York City to accept the Templeton Prize for his groundbreaking harmonization of faith and science in service of environmental protection. The Templeton Prize, given to singular champions of human dignity and progress such as Mother Teresa and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, honors people who have harnessed the power of the sciences to explore the deepest questions of the universe and humankind's place and purpose within it. His All-Holiness Bartholomew has earned this storied honor through the same works that gained him the moniker of the "Green Patriarch." Since assuming his office in 1991, Patriarch Bartholomew has convened leaders across borders and disciplines to redefine human-caused climate change, environmental destruction and pollution as not just practical crises but spiritual and moral failings. He does so because of his conviction that "we are not owners of this planet. It belongs to the coming generations as well. We are simply stewards and priests of the environment and not proprietors of it."

In addition to his environmental stewardship, Patriarch Bartholomew finds common cause with Americans in advancing the causes of democracy and peace. He assumed the Patriarchate of Constantinople during the same year that the Soviet Union dissolved. His leadership was instrumental in advancing the spir-

itual and political self-determination of the Eastern Orthodox faithful in former Soviet republics. Today, he is a steadfast and unflinching moral leader supporting the people of Ukraine as they resist Vladimir Putin's bloody imperialist invasion and a forceful counterweight to the Moscow Patriarchate's Putinist subversion. This is a cause that most Americans support, recognizing that the cause of the people of Ukraine and their war of self-defense and self-determination is now the cause of all humanity.

During this time of great uncertainty and fear, we Americans would do well to learn from Patriarch Bartholomew's example. Over the past 36 years, Patriarch Bartholomew has sought to build relationships across faith traditions, cultures and borders. In 1997, Patriarch Bartholomew was the first Eastern Orthodox Patriarch to denounce the great horror and evil of the Holocaust. He has traveled to Muslim-majority countries to foster interreligious understanding. And he has taken great care to cultivate relationships with Roman Catholic Popes and leaders across the world. These examples of moral and spiritual bridge-building are essential to our own democratic and human progress as a multi-religious, pluralist democracy.

Twenty-eight years ago, the U.S. Congress recognized Patriarch Bartholomew with the Congressional Gold Medal for his extraordinary and courageous leadership. Today, on behalf of my constituents in Maryland's beautiful 8th District, I welcome Patriarch Bartholomew back to our Nation's Capital and congratulate him on earning the Templeton Prize as the latest of many well-deserved honors.

## RECOGNIZING EMMA WEIR

**HON. BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to recognize and express my deep appreciation and gratitude to Emma Weir, who served as Communications Director and Senior Advisor for the New Democrat Coalition over the past 4 years.

Emma has been an extraordinary part of our team—bringing not only her sharp communication skills and strategic insight but also her kindness, dedication, and unwavering passion for public service. Her excellent work has helped shape our message, build connections, grow the New Dem brand, and advance the values we hold dear. As a communicator, Emma is second to none.

As Chair of the New Democrat Coalition, and before that Vice Chair for Communications, I have worked hand-in-hand with Emma to find new ways to address the challenges facing our country, adapting to a constantly evolving media environment to connect with the American people and earn their trust. Emma's hard work has ensured every New Dem Member and their staff has the tools, knowledge, and resources they need to succeed. As she starts her next chapter, Emma should know she has made an indelible mark on our Members and the Coalition.

While we will deeply miss her at New Dems, I am so proud and excited to see her step into