

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

a new opportunity with Chairman PETE AGUILAR and the House Democratic Caucus. I have no doubt Emma will bring the same compassion, professionalism, and excellence to the House Democratic Caucus that made her so effective with the New Dems.

Emma's tenure with the New Dems has been—by any measure—an immense success. As she departs, Emma leaves behind a strong New Dem brand and media presence that will continue to grow atop the foundations she worked so hard to establish. Though we are sad to see her go, the Coalition, our leadership team, and I, wish Emma all the best. We look forward to working with her in her new capacity to move our country forward and deliver results for the American people.

HONORING ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mrs. TORRES of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to our Nation's Capital, and to honor him for his contributions to the Greek Orthodox community in the Inland Empire and beyond.

In 1940, All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was born on an island called Imvros, which is located in modern-day Turkey. He completed his elementary and secondary education in both Imvros and Istanbul. For his undergraduate degree, he attended the historic Theological School of Halki, and for his graduate studies, he attended the Pontifical Oriental Institute of the Gregorian University in Rome, the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, and the University of Munich. He completed his doctoral dissertation on the topic of Canon Law.

In 1961, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew was ordained to the Diaconate, and in 1969, he was ordained to the Priesthood. During this time, he served as the Assistant Dean for the Theological School of Halki, then as the Personal Secretary for the late Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios, before being elected as Metropolitan of Philadelphia and subsequently Metropolitan of Chalcedon.

The Ecumenical Patriarch was elected in October 1991 as the 270th Archbishop of the 2000-year-old Orthodox Church. His office is a historic title dating to the sixth century—Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch. At 85 years old, he is the longest-serving Archbishop of Constantinople and leads more than 300 million congregation members nationwide. I am proud that one of those congregations, Saint Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church, is part of my congressional district in Inland, California.

The Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has used his influence to travel to every continent, where he has taken an active role in the World Council of Churches, addressed both the European Parliament and U.S. Congress, met with heads of state, and visited Orthodox churches in various countries. He has advanced diplomatic relations between Christianity, Islam, and Judaism internationally by co-sponsoring international peace conferences centered on racism and extremism. He has

also supported traditionally Orthodox countries emerging from decades of wide-scale religious persecution, facilitated conversations with Muslim and Jewish leaders to promote mutual respect and religious tolerance, and has traveled to Muslim countries rarely visited by Christian leaders.

The Ecumenical Patriarch is a champion for environmental advocacy, introducing environmental issues in his sermons, which has earned him the nickname the "Green Patriarch." He has used his impact to found several major conventions, including a global bishop assembly that has met regularly since 1992, the inaugural Synaxis (assembly) of Orthodox Primates, the Clergy-Laity Congress, and the World Youth Conference of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The Ecumenical Patriarch has received many awards, including the Congressional Gold Medal of the United States Congress in 1997, and has numerous honorary doctorates from institutions worldwide, including Georgetown University, Yale University, and several other international institutions.

I warmly welcome Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew as he visits Washington, D.C., following his acceptance of the Templeton Prize—honoring those who have made significant contributions in the fields of Religion and Science. His service to our community and beyond is worthy of the highest recognition.

HONORING MS. CYNTHIA LEE'S RE- TIREMENT FROM FEDERAL SERVICES

HON. EUGENE SIMON VINDMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. VINDMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Ms. Cynthia Lee for her remarkable 44 years of federal service with the Department of the Army.

Ms. Lee began her journey at Virginia State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. She then went on to pursue a Master of Science in Contract and Acquisition Management from the Florida Institute of Technology, laying the academic foundation for a career that would span more than 4 decades.

At the age of 18, Ms. Lee began her career as a student hire. From those early days, she demonstrated exceptional leadership, rising through the ranks to become a well-respected leader.

Over the course of her career, Ms. Lee's contributions have left a lasting impact on both her peers and the entire federal workforce in her role as Program Manager of Small Business Programs within the Department of the Army.

In recognition for her exceptional performance, Ms. Lee has received numerous awards that reflect her commitment and dedication. As Resource Management Chief, she was commended for her service as Acting Deputy Commander from May 2021 to January 2022, a role in which she displayed exceptional professionalism.

I want to personally thank Ms. Lee for her decades of service. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Lee for her 44 years of outstanding federal service. We

are deeply grateful for her dedication, her leadership, and her invaluable contributions to our Nation.

WELCOMING ECUMENICAL PATRI- ARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE, HIS ALL-HOLINESS BARTHOLOMEW'S 2025 VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

HON. DARRELL ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend a warm welcome to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All-Holiness Bartholomew, the spiritual leader and "First Among Equals" of more than 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. During this historic visit to the United States, His All-Holiness will receive the Templeton Prize—the world's most prestigious award in Religion and Science.

Patriarch Bartholomew's efforts to promote religious freedom and human rights and his initiatives to advance religious tolerance among the world's religions, together with his work toward international peace and environmental protection, have justly placed him at the forefront of global visionaries as an apostle of love, peace, and reconciliation.

We are privileged to host the longest-serving Archbishop of Constantinople in history here in our Nation's Capital, as he meets with the President, Secretary of State, and Congress. His visit to the United States serves as a testament to his unwavering commitment to fostering mutual respect and religious tolerance on a global level.

I look forward to the opportunity to welcome His All-Holiness and express our collective gratitude for his continued leadership and dedication to the cause of peace and religious liberty. In the words of His All-Holiness: "If our age will be remembered, it may be for those who dedicated themselves to the cause of peace."

RECOGNIZING THE EXTRAOR- DINARY LIFE OF DIXIE DEMUTH

HON. MORGAN MCGARVEY

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Mr. MCGARVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the legacy and remarkable life of a Louisville hometown hero, Dixie Demuth, who fought for equality for women in Kentucky and left a permanent mark on our city and commonwealth.

Born in 1917 in the famous Samuels House in Samuels, Kentucky, Dixie moved to Louisville with her mother in 1933 at the height of the Great Depression. From an early age, she worked in restaurants and bars, learning the trade in popular downtown spots until she opened her own place on 5th Street in Louisville. She called it Dixie's Elbow Room. Although Dixie was allowed to own and run a bar, a two-hundred-year-old Kentucky law prohibited women from working as bartenders or even sitting at bars. Dixie decided that just