

active in the civil rights and anti-war movements of the 1960's and 1970's, and after attending seminary decided to expand his knowledge of the world by working as a missionary. He soon ended up in Santiago, Chile, where he endured the 1973 coup that deposed President Salvador Allende. As he began witnessing the abuses of the Pinochet regime and guiding foreign journalists to document them, his friends started disappearing. He returned to the United States to pursue a master's degree at American University's School of International Service.

Over the next two decades he piled up an impressive record of leadership by founding the Washington D.C. Office on Latin America, with which I have worked closely on so many issues, and directing the D.C. office of Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (now Human Rights First). He also worked on Latin American rights for the United Methodist Church and got himself thrown out of Honduras for investigating abuses by its military junta.

In the 1990's and 2000's, Joe continued his passionate advocacy for human rights and justice through his service as a School of International Service professor and as American University's longest serving chaplain. He is known for transforming the Kay Spiritual Life Center into "a hub for social justice and courageous conversation on campus," and for bringing human rights and racial equity into the forefront of campus engagement. And it was not only in the university community that he performed his pastoral role—as a minister, he married legions of social activists and christened hundreds of their children. Whether it was weddings, funerals, or baptisms, Joe was always there for his community.

In recent years, he has also served as an active and generous member and officer of various boards and advisory committees, including those of the Center for International Policy, the Area Foundation, and the U.S. Institute of Peace. In each of these roles, Joe has brought not only his kind and gentle demeanor and his thirst for truth and fairness, but also a wealth of experience, wisdom and good judgment. His influence has been legendary and welcomed.

Joe is also a devoted husband and father who delights in spending time with his family. He has traveled widely with his loving wife, Maria Otero, and takes great pride in his three children, Justin, David and Ana, who lead their lives according to the values they learned from him.

As Joe retires from his boards and other formal duties, I hope my colleagues will join me in offering him thanks for a lifetime of service that has made the world a better place. I wish him many years ahead of good health and what our late, great colleague, John Lewis, called "good trouble".

LOWERING AGE AT WHICH A MINOR MAY BE TRIED AS ADULT FOR CERTAIN CRIMINAL OFFENSES IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

SPEECH OF

**HON. JONATHAN L. JACKSON**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2025*

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 5140, the D.C. Juvenile Sentencing Reform Act. This bill is not a serious attempt to address crime; it is a regressive, discriminatory, and counterproductive piece of legislation that will only worsen the challenges facing our communities.

This bill would lower the age at which children can be prosecuted as adults in Washington, D.C., from 16 to 14 years old for certain crimes. This will also have the impact of reducing the minimum age for transferring a juvenile to adult court to be tried as an adult. House Republicans from three states—South Dakota, Alaska, and California—voted to reduce the age to 14 in D.C., even though the age is 16 in their own states. The supporters of this bill claim it will make D.C. safer, but the facts and history prove otherwise.

First, let's talk about the discriminatory nature of this proposal. The juvenile justice system in Washington, D.C., already has stark racial disparities: more than 93 percent of youth arrests in the first half of 2025 were of Black youth. Lowering the age for adult prosecution will inevitably push more Black children into the adult system, a system that is not equipped to rehabilitate them.

Furthermore, this proposal stands in direct opposition to what we know about juvenile justice and public safety. Research from the CDC and the National Research Council has consistently found that transferring juveniles to the adult system increases violence rather than reducing it. Youth charged as adults are more likely to reoffend than those processed in juvenile courts. This is not a deterrent; it is a recipe for a cycle of violence and incarceration.

This bill would make Washington, D.C., an outlier in its approach to juvenile justice. While the current law already allows prosecutors to charge 16 and 17 year-olds as adults at their discretion, without a judge's approval, H.R. 5140 would lower that age even further.

Even in states with a history of tough-on-crime stances, many are moving in a more rehabilitative direction.

This approach aligns with a broader national trend, including in several Republican-led states, to reform juvenile justice with a focus on rehabilitation rather than punishment. For example, Texas, a state known for its traditionally tough stance on crime, has undertaken significant reforms since 2007. These reforms have focused on encouraging local, evidence-based supervision for low-level youth offenders, which has led to a significant reduction in the state-level committed population and millions of dollars in cost savings while protecting public safety. Juvenile arrests in Texas dropped by 27 percent between 2007 and 2011 following these changes.

Similarly, in Utah, Republican Governor Gary Herbert signed a comprehensive set of reforms in 2017 with near-unanimous support

from the Republican-led legislature. These reforms have also reduced reliance on locked detention by diverting more young people into community-based programs. Early outcomes from these changes show that the use of locked detention has fallen significantly, while the use of diversion is on the rise.

Even in Georgia, another state that has historically had a lower age for adult prosecution, there has been a movement to extend the juvenile justice system. In 2022, the state passed a bill to raise the adult criminal age from 17 to 18 for most crimes, recognizing that this provides adolescents with better opportunities for rehabilitation.

This bill would make Washington, D.C., an outlier. While the current law already allows prosecutors to charge 16 and 17 year-olds as adults at their discretion, without a judge's approval, H.R. 5140 would lower that age even further. In contrast, many states are moving in the opposite direction, raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction, not lowering it.

Real solutions to violent crime do not come from sending middle schoolers to adult court. They come from investing in communities. They come from supporting our schools, expanding after-school programs, providing job training, and ensuring access to mental health services.

I urge my colleagues to reject this misguided and dangerous bill. Vote No on H.R. 5140.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF  
CAPTAIN MATTHEW J. JERBI

**HON. CHRISTOPHER R. DELUZIO**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2025*

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Captain Matthew J. Jerbi, United States Navy, a resident of Fairfax, Virginia, who is retiring after 30 years of faithful service to our Nation following his commission from the United States Naval Academy.

After graduating from the Naval Academy in 1995, Captain Jerbi began his dedicated service to our Nation. Captain Jerbi served the Navy in a wide variety of roles over the next thirty years, both throughout the country and overseas.

His assignments include USS *Vincennes* (CG 49); USS *O'Brien* (DD 975); USS *Mustin* (DDG 89); USS *Normandy* (CG 60); Commanding Officer of USS *Independence* (LCS 2); Commodore of Destroyer Squadron 7; Director of Warfare Integration; Navy Unmanned Task Force; Deputy Chief of Navy Legislative Affairs; Director, Navy House Liaison Office; and as Special Assistant to the Chief of Navy Legislative Affairs.

Throughout his career, Captain Jerbi has demonstrated exceptional commitment to the country and has always striven to expand his education. In 2001, he earned a Master of Arts in National Security Affairs from the Naval Post Graduate School. His personal awards include the Legion of Merit (three awards), Meritorious Service Medal (five awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (five awards), and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (one award).

I commend Captain Jerbi for his dedication to our country and the sacrifices he and his

family have made. I thank him, his wife Kerenza, and two daughters, Isabella and Natasha, for their service and wish him fair winds and following seas as he concludes a distinguished career.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Captain Matthew Jerbi as he retires from the U.S. Navy.

#### CELEBRATING AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMEN'S DAY

#### HON. EUGENE SIMON VINDMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2025*

Mr. VINDMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Women Inspiring Women Leaders Chapter of American Business Women's Association (ABWA), chartered in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on July 31, 2021, and to celebrate American Business Women's Day.

ABWA's Women Inspiring Women Leaders Chapter held its first meeting on May 22, 2019, with a clear vision: to provide a community for businesswomen to grow through networking connections that empower, advocate and educate in a diverse atmosphere of meetings and community involvement.

Through their efforts, they have brought together businesswoman from a variety of fields, offering opportunities for personal and professional growth through mentorship and more.

I am proud to join them and their sister chapters across our country in celebrating 76 years of ABWA and its impact in Fredericksburg, Stafford, and Central Virginia.

I thank the Fredericksburg Women Inspiring Women Leaders Chapter for their dedication to uplifting others, and I'm proud to join them in celebrating their achievements and ongoing commitment to empowering women in business.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Fredericksburg Women Inspiring Women Leaders Chapter for their lasting impact on our communities and their vital contributions to our local and national economy.

#### HONORING HIS ALL-HOLINESS BARTHOLOMEW

#### HON. GRACE MENG

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2025*

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor His All-Holiness Bartholomew, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, on his visit to Washington, D.C., and his reception of the Templeton Prize in New York City.

Patriarch Bartholomew has served since 1991 as the spiritual leader of more than 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide, including many from the Greek Orthodox community from Queens, New York, whom I am proud to represent. Known as "first among equals" among the Primates of the Orthodox Church, he carries forward a tradition that reaches back nearly two thousand years to the Apostle Andrew.

Throughout his ministry, he has been a champion of religious freedom, human rights,

and interfaith dialogue. He has worked to build bridges between Christians, Jews, and Muslims, and has consistently spoken out for peace.

He is also recognized as the "Green Patriarch" for his leadership in addressing climate change and environmental destruction, which he has called a sin against God's creation. His efforts have brought together scientists, world leaders, and faith communities to safeguard our planet.

The Ecumenical Patriarch is no stranger to this Capitol. In 1997, he received the Congressional Gold Medal under this very dome. As he visits Congress once again, we honor his lifetime of service as a peacemaker and a bridge-builder for our world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing His All-Holiness Bartholomew, a voice of faith, hope, and reconciliation for our time.

#### HONORING ALICE MERRIMAN'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

#### HON. RUSS FULCHER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2025*

Mr. FULCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish Alice Merriman a very happy 100th birthday, who will be celebrating her milestone on September 26, 2025.

In 1925, Alice was born on a farm in Battle Creek, Nebraska. Fifty years ago, Alice moved to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Alice worked hard to achieve her master's degree in Idaho.

After working diligently to complete her degree, Alice spent the next twenty years working in Idaho. Together with her husband, Bob, Alice raised two children. Alice has exemplified the values of perseverance, dedication, and hard work. Alice's dedication to her family and her faith exemplifies true determination and courage.

Alice and her family have consistently embodied the traditional values we cherish in Idaho.

I thank Alice Merriman for her incredible example of perseverance and fearlessness. I wish her a very happy birthday.

#### RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN LEGION POST 667

#### HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2025*

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of American Legion Post 667 in Universal City, Texas.

Since its chartering in 1975, Post 667 has stood as a cornerstone of service, supporting veterans, active-duty service members, and families across northeast Bexar County.

For five decades, the Post has served as a hub for camaraderie, patriotic education, civic engagement, and community service.

From mentoring youth through programs that instill duty and honor, to assisting veterans as they transition to civilian life, Post 667 has embodied the American Legion's mission of service not self.

Their members have organized countless community events, supported patriotic observances, and provided a strong voice for those who have worn the uniform of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, this milestone is an opportunity to celebrate a proud legacy and to honor those who have selflessly given back to our country and community.

I commend American Legion Post 667 for fifty years of leadership, service, and sacrifice, and I wish them continued success in the decades ahead.

#### CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF LAKE ELMO, MINNESOTA

#### HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2025*

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the City of Lake Elmo, Minnesota. On Saturday, September 13, 2025, residents of Lake Elmo kicked off a month of celebrations with family, friends, and neighbors at Lions Park, including a flyover from the Commemorative Air Force of South St. Paul, Minnesota. Natural beauty, clear waters, and good fishing have long attracted people to the waters of what was then called Bass Lake and neighboring lakes. In 1848, it is believed that two Virginians, Bernard and Maria Cyphers were the first white settlers to the area. Just south of Sunfish Lake, the Cyphers built a hotel and tavern called the Lake House. In 1850, Stillwater Road was built through the community, which served as the main route for stagecoaches taking passengers between Saint Paul and Stillwater.

By 1872, the Saint Paul, Stillwater and Taylor's Falls Railroad—later the Omaha Road—was built, making it easier for tourists to reach the lake from Saint Paul. A post office was established at Bass Lake Station, with the Lake House being used as a town meeting site. In 1879, a prominent Saint Paul businessman and railroad promoter named Alpheus B. Stickney was prompted by his wife Kate to pick Lake Elmo as the new name for the growing village and its largest lake, which was a name believed to be based on a popular character in literature at the time.

Utilizing the city's nearby environment and valuable natural resources, Lake Elmo quickly became a popular summer resort. With the railways in place, Lake Elmo also became a bustling commercial hub for agriculture and industry, supplying farmers with grain houses, blacksmiths, and repair shops. After Stillwater Road was fully paved and completed in 1920, the village underwent rapid development. In 1925, supported by economic activity, the downtown was formalized as Lake Elmo Village.

While no longer an agricultural hub, Lake Elmo continues to share its natural wonders with surrounding communities. Lake Elmo Regional Park Reserve and Sunfish Lake Park offer our community access to the outdoors with modern and equestrian campgrounds, fishing piers, a boat launch, and trails for hiking and bicycling.

Lake Elmo has played a special role in Minnesota as a place of historic significance and great natural beauty. Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating the 100th anniversary of Lake Elmo.