

to her passionate dedication to community engagement, she is affectionately known as “The People’s Photographer,” or “La Fotógrafa del Pueblo,” in Central Florida.

Dilia’s work and warm personality have earned her affection and recognition within the Central Florida community. Her creative approach to photography has been acknowledged through several awards, including the 2013 APEIH Certificate of Appreciation, 2015 Revista Mujer Award, 2016 Latina Role Models Certificate of Recognition, 2016 Kissimmee Family Mission Inc. Certificate of Recognition, 2016 HAPBWA Award, 2018 Portada Latina Magazine Award, 2019 Premios Boriken Award—Excellence in Artistic Creativity Award at the Puerto Rico Parade in Osceola, 2020 Access Community Center Recognition for Meals on Wheels, 2023 Leadership Awards at the Cuban Sandwich Festival, 2023 Premios Boriken Event Recognition, and El Premio Coqui de Oro Event Recognition.

As a professional photographer, Dilia has contributed to numerous publications, including Caribbean American Passport Magazine, Portada Latina, Yes Business Magazine, the Osceola Star, El Nuevo Amanecer, Enlace Magazine, Karas Magazine, Política—Político Magazine, Revista Mujer, El Periódico El Sol de la Florida, and the HAPBWA Foundation.

Dilia Castillo’s contributions and impact on her community continue to be celebrated.

#### HONORING THE CAREER OF MS. JOSEFINA BAZAN

#### HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2025*

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Fina Bazan of Rio Grande City, who, after 48 years of service at the local Dairy Queen, has retired.

For nearly half a century, Fina has been a familiar and welcoming face to countless families and neighbors.

Though she may not always recall every name, she has always remembered the faces of those she served, treating each with warmth and kindness.

Her dedication to her work and her community is an inspiration, and her story is one I hold close. My very first job as a young man was also at a Dairy Queen.

I know firsthand the hard work and commitment it takes, and I deeply admire Fina’s devotion over these many decades.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Fina for her service, congratulating her on her well-earned retirement, and wishing her many years of health and happiness ahead.

#### HONORING MS. DEANNA PONDER

#### HON. CHUCK EDWARDS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2025*

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary service and leadership of Madison County’s Ms. Deanna Ponder in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Helene.

When Hurricane Helene devastated our communities, access to fuel was critical to sustaining emergency operations. Without hesitation, Ms. Ponder stepped forward to operate the Madison County School Bus Garage fueling station, ensuring that first responders could continue their vital work.

For 17 days following the storm, Ms. Ponder personally managed the fueling of essential vehicles and equipment including firetrucks, ambulances, county maintenance vehicles, law enforcement fleets, and mobile command centers. She gave tireless effort to her community, delivering more than 20,000 gallons of fuel to power generators supporting light towers, shower camps established by Samaritan’s Purse, law enforcement operations, and other critical services. Her dedication kept recovery efforts moving day and night, under challenging conditions, and provided a lifeline for the community when it was needed most.

Ms. Ponder’s contributions went far beyond logistics. Her leadership, calm presence, and unwavering commitment inspired those around her. First responders and volunteers repeatedly praised her clarity, efficiency, and selfless dedication. Through her efforts, she helped create an organized and reliable system that allowed others to focus on saving lives, restore essential services, and begin the process of rebuilding.

Her actions serve as a powerful reminder that leadership is not always about holding a title, but it is about stepping forward, recognizing a need, and acting with courage and compassion. Madison County, and all of Western North Carolina, are stronger today because of her extraordinary efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing our deepest appreciation of Ms. Ponder’s outstanding service and unwavering dedication to her community. Her service embodies the very best of resiliency, selflessness, and dedication in the face of disaster, and she stands as an inspiring example for us all.

#### CELEBRATING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF RECOVERY OPTIONS MADE EASY

#### HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2025*

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 35th Anniversary of Recovery Options Made Easy, a peer-run behavioral health organization that serves ten counties across Western New York and the Finger Lakes. Recovery Options Made Easy is dedicated to helping individuals build independence through healing and community connection.

Recovery Options Made Easy is more than just a health organization, it is a community-centered company that has remained committed to serving regional clients for three and a half decades. The organization proudly supplies a wide array of services, including supportive housing, recovery services, and community-based support that empower individuals through lived experiences and guidance.

Mr. Speaker, what truly sets Recovery Options Made Easy apart is not just its professional excellence, but its heart, a legacy now

carried into its 35th year. As we celebrate 35 years, let us recognize its success and contributions to Western New York. Its work reminds us that when we invest in people and support each other, we all benefit together.

#### HONORING MAYRA LA PAZ AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

#### HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 26, 2025*

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Mayra La Paz is a renowned international journalist of Dominican origin, whose professional career has left a profound mark on the world of communications. Born with an innate passion for storytelling, she began her career in her native Dominican Republic, where she quickly established herself as one of the most respected and admired voices in the media. Her direct and empathetic style, combined with a commitment to truth, led her to excel on national television, covering topics of social, cultural, and political significance, earning the respect of both the public and her colleagues. Motivated by the desire to broaden her horizons, she immigrated to New York City, where she continued her rise in Hispanic media as a reporter, host, and producer, achieving a genuine connection with the Latino community.

In the United States, her voice became a bridge between immigrants and opportunities, denouncing injustices, extolling achievements, and promoting education and culture as tools for transformation. Her talent, charisma, and journalistic ethics have allowed her to excel on networks and programs with high audiences, such as Telemundo, Telemicro Internacional, Supercanal Caribe, and Channel 35 in New York, establishing herself as an opinion leader committed to the progress of her people. She is included among the 100 most influential Dominicans abroad.

For her successful journalistic work, she has been recognized by government agencies in her country, New York, Puerto Rico, and now in Florida, as well as by private institutions. She holds a master’s degree in corporate communication from the Isabella II University in Barcelona, a bachelor’s degree in communication sciences, studies in community management in social media, and coaching studies from the John Maxuel School, among other courses related to effective communication. She is the eldest of seven siblings and has created a stable family with engineer Juan Carlos Rosario, with whom she has four children: Carlos, Joel, Junior, and Karla, as well as a granddaughter: Aria Rose. Today, based in Central Florida, Mayra La Paz continues her legacy as the founder and director of Portada Latina magazine, a media outlet that showcases and celebrates the talent, entrepreneurship, and economic contributions of Hispanics in the United States.

Her magazine celebrates its 10th year of consistent reporting in the Hispanic market in 2025. In addition to her work as a communicator, she mentors women in professional reinvention, creates the effective communication method “Qué Comunicas?” (What Do You Communicate?), and promotes empowerment,

networking, and digital education events. With more than three decades dedicated to journalism, Mayra is a symbol of resilience, excellence, and love for her community.