

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING OFFICER OSCAR
GUEVARA

HON. JAMES COMER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Officer Oscar Guevara of the Frankfort Police Department for being awarded the 2024 Medal of Merit Citation for his bravery responding to a structure fire.

Once Officer Guevara and Officer Byrd arrived at the scene of the fire, they immediately took action to rescue a mentally disabled female trapped inside the burning structure. After finding the front door was unsafe to enter, they went to the rear of the structure and scaled a fence to reach the victim.

With Officer Guevara supporting Officer Byrd, they executed a critical rescue operation by reaching through a smoke-filled window to remove the trapped female from the building moments before the structure was completely engulfed.

Through successfully executing this critical rescue operation, Officer Guevara showcased great bravery in the face of distress. Their actions demonstrate the utmost professionalism and capability beyond day-to-day requirements.

Officer Guevara voluntarily performed extraordinary acts of bravery. His actions went above and beyond and have made him deserving of this fine honor. I am confident that Officer Guevara will continue to serve as an exemplary role model for law enforcement officers across the 1st Congressional District and the entire Commonwealth of Kentucky.

RECOGNIZING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
WEEK

HON. RILEY M. MOORE

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Mr. MOORE of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, last week we celebrated Catholic Schools week, so today I rise to recognize the 24 phenomenal Catholic schools across our state of West Virginia.

Rooted in a shared Catholic faith, and committed to excellence, these schools consistently provide a high quality, Christ-centered education to Catholic and non-Catholic families across the Mountain State.

In West Virginia, our 24 Catholic schools serve thousands of students from the western border of Huntington to Wheeling and Weirton in the Northern Panhandle and Martinsburg in the Eastern Panhandle.

As a father of students currently attending one of these fine Catholic schools, it's my distinct honor to recognize the outstanding work our Catholic schools do for every child who enters their doors. These schools provide a

challenging curriculum that fosters deep intellectual and spiritual growth, while also giving children the ability to recognize, develop, and share their God-given gifts and talents.

Additionally, I'm proud to have championed the Hope Scholarship program during my time as West Virginia State Treasurer, which has expanded access to these great institutions to every child, regardless of zip code or financial means.

It is truly a privilege to recognize West Virginia's Catholic schools, and I look forward to continuing to fight for Catholic schools here in the House of Representatives. May God continue to bless our Catholic schools in West Virginia.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I recently gave birth and am unable to travel to D.C. to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 28; and YEA on Roll Call No. 29.

HONORING BISHOP MARIANN
EDGAR BUDDE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde, a steadfast leader, a courageous voice, and a beacon of moral clarity in our Nation. As the first woman to serve as the spiritual leader of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, Bishop Budde has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to faith, justice, and the common good.

Before her historic election in 2011, Bishop Budde served 18 years as the rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Minneapolis, where she ministered with compassion and conviction. Her academic journey includes a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Rochester and a master's degree from Virginia Theological Seminary. She is also a distinguished author of *How We Learn to Be Brave: Decisive Moments in Life and Faith*, *Receiving Jesus: The Way of Love*, and *Gathering Up the Fragments: Preaching as Spiritual Practice*.

Bishop Budde's impact extends far beyond the pulpit or the pages of her books. At a critical moment in our nation's history, she called upon the highest office in the land to remember the fundamental duty of leadership: to serve the people with integrity, humility, and compassion. Her words and actions have resonated within the church and in the halls of

Congress and across the country, reminding us of the moral responsibility we bear toward one another.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and honoring Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde for her steadfast faith, fearless leadership, and unwavering commitment to our nation's well-being.

RECOGNIZING JESSICA
WOOLDRIDGE

HON. JAMES COMER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jessica Wooldridge of the Frankfort Police Department for being awarded the 2024 Citizen Distinguished Achievement Award.

During a critical missing person case involving an elderly resident with dementia, Ms. Wooldridge voluntarily joined the search operation, demonstrating exceptional civic duty. While braving challenging terrain, she covered an extensive area on foot, showcasing remarkable determination. Her efforts led to the successful location of the missing person, directly saving a life. Ms. Wooldridge's actions embody the values of service, commitment, and community that the Frankfort Police Department holds dear.

Ms. Wooldridge's example serves as an inspiration, reminding us of the power of individual initiative in making a difference. Her dedication to public service makes her a role model for citizens in the community. I join with the Frankfort Police Department in thanking Ms. Wooldridge for her dedicated service and commitment. I am confident her actions will continue to inspire community members and law enforcement officers across the 1st Congressional District and the entire Commonwealth of Kentucky.

CONGRATULATING ROBERT KEMP,
SR. ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. LLOYD SMUCKER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Robert Kemp, Sr. on his 100th birthday and thank him for his service defending this Nation during World War II.

A veteran of the United States Navy, Kemp enlisted at 17 years old, against his parents' wishes and barely meeting the weight requirement. He served from 1942 until the end of the war in 1945. During his time in the Navy, Mr. Kemp fought in multiple theatres including the North Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Pacific. Kemp served as a quartermaster, assisting with the ships' navigation as well as the vessel's steering. He first served in the North Atlantic, protecting supply convoys to the United

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Kingdom. He then saw action in the Mediterranean, where his ship assisted in the invasion of Sicily. His final mission of the war was in the Pacific, part of a flotilla that participated in the invasion of the Philippines as well as the Battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. After the announcement of the Japanese surrender, his ship sailed into Tokyo Harbor to celebrate the end of the war.

Upon his return home, he settled in Baltimore, Maryland with his wife. However, he had the opportunity to travel the world as a radio technician for the Westinghouse Corporation. He spent time in Germany, Nigeria, and Iran before returning to Baltimore with his family. In his later years, Mi Kemp relocated to Delta, Pennsylvania where he lives with his son, Robert Kemp, Jr.

It is critical for us to recognize the bravery and sacrifice of members of the Greatest Generation that have helped us preserve the Nation that we so dearly love. Thanks to heroes like Mr. Kemp, that remind us to live life to the fullest and to serve others.

It is with great pride that I congratulate Mr. Kemp on a happy 100th birthday, and I sincerely thank him for his service to his country.

HONORING THE LIFE OF VERNIL MITCHELL

HON. JASMINE CROCKETT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Vernil Mitchell, a beloved nurse, philanthropist, wife, mother and constituent of the Texas' 30th District who poured love and joy into her family and her community. Born January 19, 1940, in Ashdown, Arkansas, Vernil was the oldest of thirteen children born to Prince Richard and Leatrice Allen Richard. Her earthly journey ended January 20, 2025, in Dallas, the day after her 85th birthday. She spent much of her younger life with her Uncle Elbert and Aunt Ruth Bradley, and their six children.

From modest beginnings in southeast Arkansas, Vernil developed a strong work ethic and unwavering commitment to family. She broke new ground as the first in her family to go to college, enrolling at North Texas State College, known today as the University of North Texas, to pursue a degree in nursing. While attending Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, she met Charles Mitchell in Sunday school—a chance encounter that blossomed into a lifelong love. The couple welcomed their first child, Charles Jr., before moving to Washington D.C., where their second son, Keith, soon joined the family.

Vernil's career in nursing spanned over 40 years, serving as a Licensed Vocational Nurse in Washington, D.C., a visiting nurse with the Visiting Nurses Association in the Bronx, New York City, and helping her husband Charles open his own medical practice. Charles was one of Dallas' first black orthopedic surgeons, and Vernil served as the primary nurse in his orthopedic practice. They had a shared passion for travel, the arts, tennis, skiing, gardening, cooking and most importantly being with family.

Mrs. Mitchell's caring nature went beyond her patients. She worked tirelessly to support

the next generation of African American leaders. In Dallas, Vernil supported numerous charitable activities and was incredibly active in the community. She was a charter member of the Dallas chapter of the Continental Societies, Inc., and was an active member of the Dallas chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc. She was an active member of Friendship-West Baptist Church.

We ought to look to Vernil's commitment to uplifting others as a true example of devotion to service. Mr. Speaker, I send my sincerest condolences to her family, her friends, her former colleagues, and the entire Oak Cliff community. May her legacy live on through the people she loved.

RECOGNIZING SERGEANT CRAIG GONZALEZ

HON. JAMES COMER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sergeant Craig Gonzalez of the Frankfort Police Department on being awarded the 2024 Medal of Valor for his bravery demonstrated while responding to a critical situation within Franklin County.

Without regard for his own safety, Sergeant Gonzalez played a crucial role in successfully resolving a life-threatening situation. Through his actions and support in the face of clear and obvious peril, Sergeant Gonzalez exemplified the highest standards of law enforcement professionalism and demonstrated extraordinary commitment to preserving human life.

His teamwork and decisive intervention reflected greatly upon himself and upheld the finest traditions of the Frankfort Police Department. Sergeant Gonzalez has earned the respect and support of Franklin County. Sergeant Gonzalez voluntarily performed extraordinary acts of bravery. His actions went above and beyond and have made him deserving of this fine honor. I am confident that Sergeant Gonzalez will continue to serve as an exemplary role model for law enforcement officers across the 1st Congressional District and the entire Commonwealth of Kentucky.

HONORING THE CAREER AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF DR. RON DANIELS

HON. JONATHAN L. JACKSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Ron Daniels is the President of the Institute of the Black World 21st Century and Founder of the Haiti Support Project. Dr. Daniels is a longtime advocate for the African diaspora in the U.S. and a leading figure in the field of Africana studies.

As a Distinguished Professor of history, political, science and Pan African studies, he has dedicated his career to preparing the next generation of leaders to lead in these vital fields.

As the Deputy Campaign Manager for my father, Reverend Jesse Jackson's 1988 Presi-

dential campaign, Dr. Daniels worked tirelessly to advance the vital issues and causes my father has advocated for decades. Dr. Daniels ran as an independent candidate for President in 1992 as an extension of his commitment to fulfilling the vision and mission of the Rainbow/PUSH organization.

Dr. Daniels has been a leading figure in some of the most significant social and political movements over the last six decades, including Freedom Inc. in Youngstown, Ohio; the African Liberation Day Support Committee, which spawned the first African Liberation Day (ALD) USA; the National Black Political Assembly (NBPA); National Black Independent Political Party (NBIPP); and the African American Progressive Action Network (AAPAN). Dr. Daniels played a key role in the formation of the National African American Leadership Summit (NAALS), and he was a member of the Executive Council of the National Organizing Committee of the historic Million Man March and Day of Absence in 1995 and the Millions More Movement in 2005. He currently serves as Convener of the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC), which has emerged a driving force in the U.S. and global reparations movements.

Dr. Ron Daniel's work and career has advanced the interests of the African Diaspora in the U.S. and helped to enable Continental Africans, Afro-Caribbeans and Afro-Latinos to gain greater representation and recognition for their contributions in our Nation's history.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing his career and achievements.

APPRECIATING JOHN DAVID BAKER

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, South Carolinians will always be grateful and appreciative for the life of John David Baker. The following obituary from the program of a Service Celebrating the Life of John David Baker of February 4, 2025, assisted by Shives Funeral Home, so thoughtfully highlights his achievements for the community.

As the personal Congressman for John, and Republican Co-Chairman of the Israel Caucus, I especially appreciate his devotion with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee for the existence of Israel. John promoted AIPAC continuing the family tradition of his father David who was so appreciated by my predecessor, Armed Services Committee Chairman, Floyd Spence.

John David Baker, a lifelong Columbia resident, devoted philanthropist, and visionary leader in business and community service, passed away on February 2, 2025, at the age of 69 due to complications from Parkinson's disease. His life was defined by an unwavering commitment to family, faith, and the city he loved. He leaves behind an extraordinary legacy of leadership, generosity, and dedication to improving the lives of others.

Born in Columbia, South Carolina, on July 5, 1955, John was the son of JoAnn and David Baker and one of five siblings. He attended the University of South Florida before earning a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Finance from the University of