

RECOGNIZING DANNY WALLACE
SMITH WITH A CONGRESSIONAL
VETERAN COMMENDATION

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 17, 2025

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to present Danny Wallace Smith of Crawford, Texas, with a Congressional Veteran Commendation for his exceptional armed forces service and unwavering commitment to our country, state, and local communities. Danny served three years in the United States Army, including 18 months in Vietnam during the Tet Offensive of 1968, one of the most significant and challenging periods in United States military history. His bravery and dedication were recognized with numerous commendations, including the National Defense Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with 5 Bronze Service Stars and one Silver Star, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, Navy Valorous Service Ribbon, and a Presidential Unit Citation.

Following his military service, Danny pursued higher education at Hardin Simmons University and earned a B.A. from Wayland Baptist College. He then dedicated 32 years to the Texas Department of Public Safety, where he rose to the rank of Regional Commander, overseeing 46 counties. His leadership and commitment to public safety earned him widespread respect. Notably, he served as the Commander of all DPS uniformed forces during the Mt. Carmel incident, further underscoring his critical role in high-stakes situations.

After retiring from DPS, Danny continued to serve by leading in the field of education. As Director of the Law Enforcement Academy and Division Chair of the Emergency Services Education Center at McLennan Community College, he mentored and trained future law enforcement professionals. His service extended further when he was called upon to serve as Interim Police Chief in Bellmead (2019) and Robinson (2020), Texas. In 2023, he was appointed as the full-time Police Chief of Robinson, where he later retired in August 2025.

Spanning over 54 years, Danny's career reflects a lifetime of selfless service, from the battlefield to public safety leadership, education, and community policing. His enduring contributions have had a lasting impact on the people of Texas and the broader law enforcement community.

It is with great honor and respect that I present Danny Wallace Smith with a Congressional Veteran Commendation from the 17th Congressional District of Texas. His exemplary service to our Nation and continued contributions to his community stand as a powerful example of public duty and honor.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MAYOR WILLIAM S. "SANDY" STIMPSON

HON. BARRY MOORE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 17, 2025

Mr. MOORE of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the remarkable ac-

complishments of Mayor William S. "Sandy" Stimpson, 108th Mayor of the City of Mobile, Alabama. Since his election in 2013, Mayor Stimpson has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to public service, fiscal responsibility, and the shared vision of building Mobile into a city that is safer, more business-friendly, and more family-friendly for all.

Under his leadership, Mobile has achieved major financial reform, including reducing their bonded debt by nearly \$210 million and their unfunded liabilities by more than \$200 million. These reforms led to multiple credit rating upgrades and allowed for significant investments to improve public safety, infrastructure, and city personnel.

Mayor Stimpson has also championed long-term improvements, including modernizing the city's zoning code and launching a nationally recognized urban blight reduction program. As a founding member and chairman of the Alabama Big 10 Mayor Association, his influence extends beyond Mobile, strengthening the voice of Alabama's cities across the state.

On behalf of the people of Alabama, I want to thank Mayor Stimpson for his leadership and deep commitment to public service. Through his work, every Mobilian has been empowered to have a voice and a seat at the table in shaping a better future for their city.

HONORING MR. DENZEL
WASHINGTON: NO ROLE TOO BIG

HON. KWEISI MFUME

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 17, 2025

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an esteemed artist who truly needs no introduction: actor, producer, and director, Denzel Washington. The two-time Oscar winner and Tony Award recipient has carved a path for actors and performers who seek to dedicate their lives to the pursuit of artistic accomplishment.

Born in Mount Vernon, New York, Denzel developed his acting skills at Fordham University, the American Conservatory Theater, and even at a summer stock theater in St. Mary's City, Maryland. His film debut was in 1977's *Wilma*, which proved significant for reasons entirely unrelated to the movie—it was on that set that he met Pauletta Pearson, who 6 years later would become his wife. He credits her as the most important person in his life, the one who keeps him grounded and fills his days with love and purpose.

Denzel began receiving national attention for his talent in the early 1980s. He impressed critics and audiences alike in the television drama *St. Elsewhere*, and his true breakout film role was in 1984's *A Soldier's Story*.

In 1989, Mr. Washington reached the pinnacle of his profession, winning his first Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor in the film *Glory*, directed by Edward Zwick, wherein he portrayed a soldier in the illustrious 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, fighting for his race's freedom in the Civil War.

His portrayals on the silver screen demonstrate his brilliance and remarkable range as an actor. Washington's films are both critically acclaimed and beloved by the viewing public. Some of his most notable works include *The Preacher's Wife*, *American Gang-*

ster, and *Training Day*, which earned him a second Oscar, this time for Best Actor. Denzel was only the second Black actor in history to win the Best Actor award, after Sidney Poitier won it in 1964 for his performance in *Lilies of the Field*.

Mr. Washington's contributions to society extend far beyond the lives that he portrays in his films. Denzel has redefined what it means to be a star in Hollywood, speaking out about his commitment to service and efforts to be an advocate for good.

Since the 1990s, Mr. Washington has served as both a board member and national spokesman for the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, which provide voluntary after-school programs for our nation's young people. He even received the distinction of having a New York City elementary school named in his honor, thanks to his extensive work with the Boys & Girls Club.

Denzel was also named the 2021 Honorary Sergeant Major of the Army due to his work with the Fisher House Foundation, a non-profit that constructs housing for military and veteran families, free of charge. In 2022, President Joe Biden awarded Mr. Washington the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.

In 1996, I had just departed from the Congress to become the president and CEO of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). That year, I selected Denzel and songstress Whitney Houston to co-host the NAACP Image Awards, which celebrate the outstanding achievements and performances of people of color across film, television, music, and more.

Mr. Speaker, Denzel Washington's career encapsulates what it means to use art for good. He is an artist who wields his platform to foster inclusion and support numerous worthy causes. His work doesn't just entertain—it empowers people of every race, color, and creed. It is a true honor to recognize Mr. Denzel Hayes Washington, Jr., as an inspiring force for future generations of filmmakers and artists.

HONORING PHIL COTURRI

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 17, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Phil Coturri as he celebrates his 60th harvest in Sonoma Valley. Over six decades, Mr. Coturri has become a pioneer in organic viticulture and a leading voice in sustainable winegrowing, leaving a lasting impact on California's agricultural and environmental landscape.

Born on October 3, 1952, in San Francisco, Mr. Coturri grew up in the Italian neighborhood of Visitation Valley and spent weekends and summers at his family's home in Glen Ellen. When Mr. Coturri was eight, his parents purchased a small property on Sonoma Mountain, where they planted two acres of Zinfandel. By age eleven, he was making wine alongside his father and brother, sparking a lifelong passion for viticulture. Mr. Coturri later earned a Bachelor of Arts in American Literature from Sonoma State University and married his wife, Arden Kremer, with whom he shares two

sons, Sam and Max, and four grandchildren: Althea, Sabine, Hudson, and Wilder.

Mr. Coturri's professional journey began with his first harvest in 1965 at Laurel Glen Vineyard, where he gained firsthand experience in vineyard management. In 1979, he founded Enterprise Vineyards, setting out to prove that organic practices could thrive in commercial winegrowing. At a time when chemical use was the industry norm, Mr. Coturri pioneered a holistic, year-round approach focused on soil health and biodiversity. Under his leadership, Enterprise Vineyards has grown to employ more than 160 full-time workers and manage over 700 acres of certified organic and biodynamic vineyards across our Sonoma, Napa, and Solano Counties. His work has helped establish organic viticulture as a cornerstone of modern sustainable agriculture.

Throughout his career, Mr. Coturri has earned widespread recognition for his leadership and innovation. Often referred to as the "Master of Mountain Viticulture" and the "Godfather of Sonoma Wine Country," he has shaped both the cultural and physical landscape of our Sonoma Valley. Mr. Coturri's grapes have supplied many of California's most celebrated wines, with the North Bay Bohemian naming him Winemaker of the Year in 2020 and Winegrower of the Year in 2023. He also played a key role in the 2013 designation of the Moon Mountain District AVA, reflecting his decades of expertise farming the volcanic terrain.

In 2005, the Coturri family founded Winery Sixteen 600, dedicated to Rhone and heritage varietals sourced from notable sites across our Sonoma Valley, including Moon Mountain. In 2015, the family opened the Winery Sixteen 600 Tasting House in downtown Sonoma, which has since become a local hub for music and art. The tasting room features a vast vinyl record collection and artwork celebrating Bay Area creativity. His sons, Sam and Max, now carry on the family legacy through their leadership in the winery and vineyard operations.

Beyond his professional achievements, Mr. Coturri has been an active supporter of the local community. He has contributed to organizations such as the Sonoma Valley Vintners and Growers Alliance, Swim America Sonoma, the Seva Foundation, the Rex Foundation, and La Luz Center, reflecting his enduring commitment to the place and people that shaped his life's work.

Mr. Speaker, we thank Phil Coturri for his six decades of leadership, innovation, and service to our Sonoma Valley. It is fitting and proper that we honor him here today for his lifelong dedication to sustainable agriculture and his lasting contributions to our community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN
EVERETT OLIVER, JR.

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 17, 2025

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of John Everett Oliver, Jr., a devoted public servant and beloved husband, brother, uncle, and friend, who passed away suddenly on September 5, 2025, at the age of 75. Born in Washington, D.C., on

April 21, 1950, John was a true Washingtonian who embodied dedication to country and community. He grew up in Kensington, Maryland, attending Albert Einstein High School, where he excelled on the baseball field.

After high school, John attended the University of Maryland, College Park, and faithfully served his Nation in the U.S. Army Reserves at Fort Meade from 1971 to 1977. His professional journey began modestly, as a payroll clerk in NOAA's Rockville office in 1973. Over the next four decades, through intellect, integrity, and leadership, John rose through the ranks to become the Deputy Assistant Administrator for NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, where he managed a billion-dollar budget and guided thousands of employees. In 1998, John entered the Senior Executive Service, where he was called upon time and again to lead during times of change and crisis. In 2008, he received the prestigious Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Senior Executive Service in recognition of his role as a key architect of NOAA's fisheries management strategic plan. He also served at the Office of Management and Budget, earning deep respect from his colleagues while working on the President's budget. When John retired, the accolades poured in, with words like mentor, integrity, key change agent, accessible in a crisis, and camaraderie. A former NOAA administrator told him he was a "legend, an institution, and a great American." That was John's catchphrase when he wanted to praise someone's work: "You're a great American." To the NOAA community, John was more than a colleague and a mentor—he was family. It was at NOAA where John met Cheryl, the love of his life. They married in 2004 and together built a life full of joy, friendship, and service, eventually retiring in Leland, North Carolina. In retirement, John and Cheryl continued their commitment to community, supporting charities and educational institutions, including East Carolina University's Coastal Studies Institute. Beyond his professional accomplishments, John was a man of passion and warmth. He was a lifelong Washington Redskins fan, attending four Super Bowls and nearly every home game for four decades. He enjoyed a good cigar, a fine bourbon—particularly Maker's Mark—and had a deep appreciation for history, especially the legacy of World War II. His travels with Cheryl to Normandy, Berlin, and beyond were a testament to his reverence for the sacrifices of those who came before. John will be remembered for his big laugh, his gift for friendship, and his steady presence that lifted all who knew him. To his colleagues, he was a legend; to his family, he was "Jack"; and to all of us, he was a great American.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our deepest condolences to John's beloved wife Cheryl, his sisters Joanna Good, Lynn Petty, and Caroline Schofield, his nieces, and his extended family and many friends. May his memory be a blessing, and may we honor his life by carrying forward his example of service, generosity, and friendship.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM (BILL) PATTERSON MATTHEWS, USA, RETIRED, WITH A CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 17, 2025

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to present retired USA Lieutenant Colonel William (Bill) Patterson Matthews, of Mexia, Texas, with a Congressional Veteran Commendation in recognition of his outstanding service to both his country and his community.

After receiving his Bachelor of Science in Education from Texas A&M University, Lt. Col. Matthews served with distinction in the United States Army for over 24 years. His military career included service in over 30 countries, and a particularly harrowing tour in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968 with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (Blackhorse), where he served under Colonel George Patton and Colonel Jimmie Leach. During that time, he was twice wounded by RPG attacks, survived two mine explosions, and earned two Bronze Stars for Valor, the Army Commendation Medal, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. He was medevacked to Fort Hood after his second Purple Heart. He continued to serve in command roles for the rest of his active service and subsequently earned a Master's in Business Administration from Syracuse University, eventually retiring in 1992.

Following his military retirement, Lt. Col. Matthews settled in Mexia, Texas, where he launched a second career in education. He earned teaching and principal certifications from Tarleton State University. Beginning in 1994, he taught 7th grade science in Mexia ISD and went on to become principal at Mexia Intermediate and later R.Q. Sims Intermediate School. He earned a reputation as an innovative and passionate educator, implementing impactful programs like "Blackcats Don't Bully" to combat bullying and "Colonel's Kids" to support underperforming students from low-income backgrounds. These initiatives benefited over 400 students and helped earn him recognition as runner-up for Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) Elementary Principal of the Year in 2002. He also helped the district achieve its first-ever "Exemplary" rating and introduced several science-focused initiatives, including dedicated labs and an outdoor classroom. His educational philosophy emphasizes that every child can learn when properly led and supported, a belief he carried throughout his career.

In addition to his educational work, Lt. Col. Matthews remained deeply engaged in civic life. He served multiple terms as president and song leader of the century-old Mexia Lions Club and founded the "Red, White, and Blue Car Show" in 2012, which became the club's major fundraising event. He has also been a dedicated member of the First Baptist Church of Mexia since 1992, serving as a deacon, Sunday school teacher and director, and choir member. He has actively participated in church productions like the Easter Pageant and Christmas Dinner Theater. His return to teaching in 2012, where he taught physics and coached golf until his final retirement in 2022, underscores his unwavering commitment to