

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary achievement by a team who represents the very best of the space coast, our State, the Florida Tech Panthers, the 2025 NCAA Division II women's soccer national champions.

With a decisive 3-0 victory over Franklin Pierce, these student-athletes captured their first national title in program history. This championship was earned through discipline, teamwork, and an unwavering commitment to excellence—values that extend well beyond the soccer field.

I applaud the players, coaches, staff, and families who supported this team at every step of the way. Their hard work and leadership exemplify what college athletics is all about: strong competition, strong teammates, and future strong leaders.

Florida Tech Panthers made history and made our community proud. I congratulate our national champions.

Go Panthers.

RECOGNIZING AIR FORCE MASTER SERGEANT
JOHN "JAY" JOHNSON

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Brevard County's Veteran of the Month for December 2025, Master Sergeant John "Jay" Johnson of the United States Air Force.

Master Sergeant Johnson entered service in 1961 and spent 20 years defending our Nation, retiring at the distinguished rank of master sergeant. He served as a direction finding controller and Morse intercept operator, critical roles in intelligence and national security efforts during some of the most challenging times during the Cold War and the Vietnam war.

Nearly 12 of his 20 years of service was spent overseas, including assignments in Germany, Italy, Turkey, Japan, and the Philippines. His dedication and professionalism earned him numerous commendations, including the Air Force Commendation Medal, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, each a testament to his commitment to our Nation and his exceptional service to our Nation.

Master Sergeant Johnson embodies the very best of our Air Force and our country. We thank him for his unwavering commitment to duty and for his dedicated service for decades in defending freedom around the world and here at home.

FOCUSING ON REAL RESULTS

(Mr. VASQUEZ of New Mexico was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. VASQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with deep gratitude—gratitude to the people of New Mexico who have placed their trust in me and gratitude for all of those who have worked with me this past year, both Democrats and Republicans, who have helped me deliver real results for folks back home.

My district is one of the largest districts in the country, larger than the State of Pennsylvania, and includes major cities, border towns, Tribal communities, and rural counties that often feel forgotten by Washington.

New Mexico's Second District embodies the American spirit. We are a diverse people who get up every day, work a hard day's job, and take pride in our families and the work that we do.

This year, I set out with one simple goal: focus on the people in our district and do good by the families who call New Mexico home, regardless of their party affiliation. That is why, at a time when Washington has been paralyzed by partisan gridlock and way too much drama, my focus has remained on common sense and delivering real results.

The good people of New Mexico elected me to do a job, and I intend to do it; not with red or blue solutions, but practical solutions that are rooted in the real lives of the people who I represent.

Across southern New Mexico, we have seen that wildfire season is no longer seasonal. It is a constant threat. We have seen the State's two largest wildfires ravage communities and displace generations of folks from their homes.

I worked with my colleagues on both sides to pass a bipartisan bill that strengthens our ability to fight fires in remote and rural areas. My Aerial Firefighting Enhancement Act ensures that our communities and firefighters have more resources to protect lives, homes, and livelihoods when it counts most.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about feeling forgotten, sometimes it is our rural communities that feel the most left out—places where Federal support can make the difference between a school being able to stay open, between having a graded road or one that is washboarded and crumbling, and between having lifesaving care that can reach your home in time.

That is why I successfully led a bipartisan push to restore \$9 million and secure rural school funding for New Mexico's rural schools and our infrastructure, delivering much-needed resources to places like Catron, Grant, Sierra, and Cibola Counties.

Staying focused on common sense also meant listening to our military families at White Sands Missile Range and Holloman Air Force Base. When they told me they were going without care because of the enormously long distances that it took to get to a hospital or to a clinic, I worked on a bipartisan bill that is now law, which expands travel reimbursement under TRICARE so that servicemembers and their loved ones aren't forced to shoulder the unnecessary costs just to get the care that they need.

Serving in New Mexico isn't just about passing bills here. It is about showing up when people need you. This

year, my team and I resolved over 650 constituent cases, cutting through red tape, standing up to bureaucracy, and returning nearly \$4.5 million to our taxpayers who were rightfully owed that money. For families waiting on Social Security, veterans navigating the VA, or seniors dealing with the IRS, that help was immediate and personal.

I have traveled over 5,000 miles on the road in my district this year. From talking to students in Deming, meeting with Tribal leaders in Zuni Pueblo, hosting a carne asada with oil workers in Carlsbad, and convening roundtables with police departments in Albuquerque, this is a big district with many needs, and advocacy doesn't just start at the Capitol steps.

Mr. Speaker, 2025 was also a big year in the fight to protect our public lands. When extreme proposals threatened to sell off millions of acres of our public lands, I founded the first-ever Bipartisan Public Lands Caucus to keep those lands public for hunters, ranchers, families, and future generations who deserve to keep this unique American birthright. Public lands are one of our Nation's best ideas, and I intend to keep it that way.

I have also worked hard to secure Federal investments across New Mexico, from addressing homelessness to investing in workplace training, to launching a new express bus service connecting Las Cruces to El Paso. I showed up, listened to what folks needed, and we got to work. These are smart investments that strengthen local economies and improve the daily lives of New Mexicans.

Lastly, my focus on bringing common sense to Washington is why I recently introduced the new plan for immigration this year. As someone who was raised on both sides of the border and represents 180 miles of that border today, I know that border security is more complex than just building a wall. I know that both parties have often gotten it wrong.

We need an immigration system that reflects our American values, and that makes smart investments in security and more legal pathways that strengthen our economy rather than undermine it.

I want to be clear about something: I don't work for either party. I work for the people of New Mexico, every single one of them, whether they voted for me or not. I am proud of what we have accomplished this year, but more than that, I am proud of how we accomplished it: by choosing collaboration over conflict.

Mr. Speaker, "thank you"; "gracias" to the people of New Mexico for sending me here. I will continue showing up, fighting for them, and doing the work they sent me here to do.

HONORING ROB MC LIN ON HIS RETIREMENT

(Mr. MESSMER of Indiana was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MESSMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a Hoosier leader and a man whose service to our community has had a great impact on all of Indiana and the healthcare industry of our country. After 34 fruitful years, Mr. Rob McLin will retire in January from Good Samaritan Hospital in Vincennes, Indiana, the hospital in which he was born.

Over the years, Rob has shown great leadership at every level he has worked, including 15 years as president and CEO.

His tenure brought some of the most transformative advancements in Good Samaritan history, including the Beacon Project, the Gibault Memorial Tower construction, implementation of the Epic medical records system, creation of the hospital's EMS program, expansion of the Family Health Center, and establishment of a residency program that now educates new physicians in southern Indiana.

Rob has led the hospital through immense challenges, including the disastrous COVID-19 pandemic. He is a well-respected healthcare advocate, having served as the chair of the Indiana Hospital Association in 2020; and this year receiving the distinguished service award, which is one of the highest honors in Indiana healthcare.

Rob retires, leaving not only his many accomplishments but also a legacy of compassion, excellence, and commitment to the people who he served. I congratulate him on his well-deserved retirement and wish him many happy adventures with his wife, Angela, and their children and grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Rob for his great service to our community.

HONORING ROCKPORT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Mr. MESSMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary group of young, Eighth District Hoosier artists from Indiana's Rockport Elementary School whose handmade Christmas ornaments are beautifully representing our great State at this year's National Christmas Tree Lighting Festival.

Each year, students from across the country are chosen to design Christmas tree ornaments that reflect the beauty and character of their home State.

This year, Rockport Elementary students in my district created wonderful ornaments that celebrate the spirit of Indiana, with some ornaments honoring our proud agricultural heritage and others displaying our State bird, the ruby red northern cardinal; and our State flower, the elegant peony.

Their artwork showcases everything from the Indy 500 race to our perpetual rolling cornfields and even pays tribute to Abraham Lincoln's boyhood home. These students just didn't create deco-

rations, but they captured the spirit of our Hoosier State for the whole Nation to admire.

When I landed in Washington, D.C., this week, I went straight from the airport to visit our special State tree nearby the White House Christmas tree. I was so proud to see the artistry of our students, and I am inspired by their talent and creativity.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate every student who contributed to this wonderful display, as well as the teachers and families who encouraged their education and talents. Rockport Elementary has made Indiana proud, and I am honored to recognize their achievements here today.

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REMEMBERING RICHARD BARBER, JR.

(Mr. LATIMER of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to a remarkable man, a pillar of the community, and a devoted family man. Richard Joseph Barber, Jr., Esq., affectionately known as Dick, passed away on December 11. Dick's journey was one marked by dedication, service, and an unwavering commitment to the betterment of those around him.

A graduate of Archbishop Stepinac High School, Dick went on to further his education at St. Michael's College in Vermont, followed by St. John's Law School, which launched his career in the law.

Beyond the courtroom, Dick was a successful businessman, owning establishments such as the Coachman and Harbor Marine, which served as testaments to his entrepreneurial spirit and business acumen.

Dick's contributions went beyond law and business. He proudly served his country as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps, exhibiting a profound sense of duty. His dedication to duty and service was further exemplified through his attainment of numerous degrees and certifications in the New York State firefighting and hazmat world, ensuring that his community remained a safer place for all for over 60 years.

Left to cherish his memory are his beloved wife, Marilyn; his son, Richard III, and wife, Elaine, and their son, Richard IV; as well as his daughter, Deborah Rees, and her children, Nicole and Kimberly. Dick also leaves behind his siblings, Patricia Spacavento, Marylou Harvey, and Joan Syp. He was predeceased by his brother, Thomas Barber. He was the son of the late Richard Barber, Sr., and the late Frances Magnus Barber. His legacy will be felt not only by his family but by the countless lives he touched.

At this hour, there is a Mass of Christian Burial celebrated at the Church of the Resurrection in Rye, New York. In-

terment will follow at Greenwood Union in Rye.

May Dick rest in peace.

REMEMBERING KAREN V. HILL

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember the life and times of Karen V. Hill, who passed away in November.

Her accomplishments and achievements in her 72 years cannot be properly summarized in a minute or two. She lived a life of leadership and service for 30-plus years, serving the underserved in equity, housing, and much more. She was appointed by the Federal court to implement the desegregation of housing and was president and CEO of the Harriet Tubman Home to preserve that historical legacy. She was appointed by Senators CHUCK SCHUMER and KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND to the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission. She served as program director for the National Urban League, chief executive of the American Homeowner Education and Counseling Institute, and chair of the National Low-Income Housing Coalition.

Through her sorority memberships, her faith in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Order of the Eastern Star, and the love of her large family and extended friendships, Karen Hill left her mark. Her visitation this past weekend at Greater Centennial AME Zion Church in Mount Vernon was a time for celebration of her life and acknowledgment that she now rests with the Lord.

REMEMBERING SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, in the season where Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus, African Americans celebrate Kwanzaa, our Hispanic friends await the Three Kings Day celebration, our friends in the Jewish community commemorate Hanukkah and the historic celebration of light, the oil that lasted for eight nights, providing the menorah with light and warmth and survival.

With the horror of Sydney fresh at hand, a father and son using their weapons to systematically kill Jews celebrating Hanukkah at a beach event, it is a bittersweet month. Once again, we mourn unnecessary death motivated by intense hatred, fueled by the availability of weapons of death.

Over thousands of years of world history, Jews have been targeted in every land for death and for genocide, and this is just the latest such outrage.

As a Christian myself, I must let love rule, not hatred. We must end the manifestation of that hatred and violence. We must embrace our Jewish brothers and sisters, alongside those of every religion, that peace and tolerance are the only way to go, and it is a two-way street. All must commit themselves to tolerance and coexistence, and Almighty God will sort out the rest.

We mourn with the loss of the families in Sydney and all who suffer violence from anti-Semitism and hatred of any sort.