

the strength of our city. Treating their status as temporary ignores the reality of their lives and their deep roots here.

I stand with Boston's Haitian community, local advocates, and faith leaders calling for an extension of Haitian TPS and permanent protections.

Our city is stronger when families can live without fear and we will continue to stand with immigrant communities who call Boston home.

Respectfully,

JULIA MEJIA,
Boston City Councilor At-Large.

My name is Maria Teresa Nagel, I am the Director of Immigrant Affairs in the City of Somerville, MA, and I am here in strong opposition to the termination of TPS for Haitians.

Haitians have a long and proud history of commitment to the United States, dating back to the Chasseurs—Haitian soldiers who fought alongside U.S. forces during the Revolutionary War. Since then, more than one million Haitians have made this country their home. Today, over 80,000 Haitians live in Massachusetts alone, where they play an outsized and indispensable role in our healthcare and education systems.

They are our nurses, home health aides, and doctors. They are our teachers, teachers' assistants, and family liaisons. They care for our children, our elders, and our most vulnerable neighbors. They are essential to our economy, our communities, and the cultural fabric of this nation.

After the catastrophic earthquake in 2010—an event that affected more than three million people and claimed over 200,000 lives—the United States granted Temporary Protected Status to Haitians already living here. At the time, the Secretary of Homeland Security described the disaster as one of "historic proportions" and acknowledged that the "personal safety" of Haitians would be endangered if they were forced to return. Sixteen years later, Haiti continues to endure extraordinary hardship. Corruption, devastating hurricanes, political instability, and widespread civil unrest have only deepened the crisis. The dangers that once justified TPS have not disappeared, they have intensified. Meanwhile, the lives of Haitian TPS holders have become inseparable from our own. They have built families, careers, and communities here. This is their home. Ending TPS for Haiti would tear 330,000 people—our neighbors, coworkers, parents, and caregivers—from the communities they sustain. It would destabilize families, devastate local economies, and severely weaken critical sectors like healthcare, retail, and education that all of us rely on. And it would do so in direct contradiction of the law, with full knowledge that the extraordinary and unsafe conditions in Haiti persist.

No one, no one, will benefit from ending TPS for Haitians this February. The consequences will be profound and far-reaching, and the cost will be borne by all of us. Most of all, it will mark a failure of our moral responsibility and our legal obligations.

I urge the federal government to reconsider this termination—for the safety of our neighbors, the stability of our economy, and

the values we claim as the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DAVID
EMERSON MITCHELL

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of David Emerson Mitchell, who passed away on January 2, 2026, after a 15-year battle with multiple myeloma, a rare blood cancer. He was 75.

David spent his life working on issues that mattered—with people he cared about—to leave the world a little better than he found it; and he did. It was David's own battle with cancer that prompted him, in 2016, to found Patients For Affordable Drugs. Confronted firsthand with a drug pricing system that put life-saving medicines out of reach for millions of Americans, David became a voice for patients who, for too long, have faced immeasurable hurdles to access the medications they need. His goal was both simple and audacious: to hold drug companies accountable for extreme, nonnegotiable prices that ignored patients' ability to pay.

Under his leadership, Patients For Affordable Drugs became a trusted, bipartisan force for reform, centering patient voices in a debate long dominated by corporate interests and helping change the trajectory of drug pricing in this country.

Over nearly a decade, Patients For Affordable Drugs worked with a coalition of allies to push for meaningful reform nationwide. That work paid off in 2022 with the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act. For the first time in history, Medicare was granted the authority to negotiate lower drug prices for America's seniors. Undoubtedly, David's work and the advocacy of Patients For Affordable Drugs played a major role in delivering the most significant change to our Nation's drug pricing policy in generations. This year alone, seniors are expected to save \$1.5 billion in out-of-pocket expenses on prescription drugs. For that, I will always be grateful to him.

Beyond this landmark achievement, David was a central voice before Congress. He testified before the health committees in both the House and Senate numerous times, representing patients across the country struggling to afford their medications. He organized patients to visit with their Members of Congress and to share their personal stories. It was his ability to connect the realities of everyday Americans with policy changes that made him such an effective advocate.

He was described as "the face of the opposition to the pharmaceutical industry in Washington." His advocacy was marked by clarity, discipline, and moral focus. When the entrenched perspective was that high drug prices were necessary to support innovation, David countered with a simple message that will continue to resonate: "Drugs don't work if people can't afford them."

Before founding Patients For Affordable Drugs, he helped shape some of the Nation's most effective public-health campaigns, including efforts to reduce drunk driving, increase

seatbelt and child safety seat use, and improve roadway safety. Those campaigns saved countless lives, often quietly and outside the spotlight, but their impact was profound.

David's genius was not just in identifying public health problems, but in knowing how to solve them—and how to build the momentum needed to drive real solutions. He helped demonstrate that patients are not passive observers of policy, but essential participants in shaping it.

Those of us who knew David and worked with him are so grateful to him for his tenacious advocacy and all that he accomplished. David Mitchell lived a distinguished life in service to others, and the world is safer, fairer, and more humane because he was in it. I am hopeful his work will continue to inspire countless others to channel their own challenges into advocacy and reform, just as he did. His legacy will endure in the lives he touched, the patients he empowered, and the laws he helped change.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the distinguished life of David Mitchell. Those of us who knew David and worked with him are so grateful to him for his tenacious advocacy and all that he accomplished. David Mitchell lived a distinguished life in service to others, and the world is safer, fairer, and more humane because he was in it. I am hopeful his work will continue to inspire countless others to channel their own challenges into advocacy and reform, just as he did. His legacy will endure in the lives he touched, the patients he empowered, and the laws he helped change.

RECOGNIZING MR. CLARK D.
THOMAS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Clark D. Thomas, a special employee of the USDA Rural Development—Missouri State Office, who recently retired after many dedicated years of service.

Mr. Thomas was a remarkable civil servant for nearly six decades and deserves recognition for such an exemplary career in federal service. Clark began his federal service with the former Farmer's Home Administration on June 5, 1967. His federal service spanned 58 years, 3 months, and 25 days until his retirement on September 30, 2025. During his federal career, Clark served two years active duty in the Army as a First Lieutenant and was deployed to Vietnam. Upon returning from Vietnam, Clark continued his federal service at Farmer's Home Administration and then USDA Rural Development. During his tenure as a Program Director, a role he served in until his retirement in September 2025, Clark was responsible for more than 3,700 obligations totaling more than \$2.4 billion in assistance to rural Missouri communities and businesses.

Over the course of Clark's 58 years of service to the state of Missouri, many changes have occurred, but his consistent dedication remained. From water programs to broadband deployment, Clark made sure rural communities had the infrastructure needed to thrive. The unwavering support Clark received from

his wife, Donna, and his daughters, Tammy and Traci, was also instrumental in him achieving such a successful career.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing Clark Thomas for his long tenure of service to the citizens of the State of Missouri, and in thanking him for being an outstanding public servant. I wish him all the best in his retirement.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIRGINIA HOSPITAL & HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION

HON. JENNIFER L. McCLELLAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA), a century of partnership, leadership, and dedicated service to improving health and health care for all Virginians.

Since its founding in 1926 as a trade association of Virginia hospitals, VHHA has grown into a statewide leader, representing 26 member-health systems and 117 community, specialty, and psychiatric hospitals that deliver comprehensive care to individuals and families across our Commonwealth.

For the past 100 years, VHHA has worked collaboratively with hospitals, health systems, policymakers, and community partners to ensure the sustainability of Virginia's health care system, to transform care delivery, and to advance public health and health equity. At the heart of its mission is the vision of making Virginia the healthiest state in the Nation by driving policies and programs to improve quality, expand access, and promote patient-centered care.

Founded in 1926, VHHA has spent the past 100 years supporting the essential work of Virginia's hospitals and health systems to protect health, enhance access to care, and strengthen our economy. Today, VHHA represents 26 health systems and 117 acute care, children's, psychiatric, long-term care, rehabilitation, and specialty hospitals serving communities throughout Virginia.

For a century, VHHA has worked in close partnership with policymakers, health care leaders, and community stakeholders to advance high-quality, patient-centered care and to ensure the long-term sustainability of Virginia's health care system. Guided by its mission to improve the health of Virginians and its vision of making Virginia the healthiest state in the Nation, VHHA has played a central role in shaping health policy, supporting innovation, and responding to the evolving needs of patients and providers alike.

Virginia hospitals contribute \$4.5 billion annually in community support and generate \$68.8 billion in positive economic activity statewide. They directly employ more than 138,000 Virginians, provide over \$13 billion in annual payroll, and serve as anchor institutions in cities and rural communities across the Commonwealth.

Each year, VHHA member hospitals accommodate more than 4.45 million patient days, deliver over 86,000 babies, and handle 92 percent of all voluntary and involuntary inpa-

tient behavioral health admissions in Virginia. These figures reflect not only the scale of care provided but also the critical role hospitals play in meeting urgent health needs, supporting families, and responding to public health and behavioral health challenges.

Throughout 2026, VHHA is honoring this remarkable centennial with events that recognize its past achievements and look forward to the future of health care in Virginia. As we confront ongoing challenges, from rising demand for health care services to workforce shortages and health disparities, VHHA's century of experience and commitment to innovation remains invaluable. I commend the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association, its members, and its leadership for their steadfast dedication to improving the health and well-being of all Virginians.

HONORING THE CREW OF THE FISHING VESSEL LILY JEAN

HON. SETH MOULTON

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

Mr. MOULTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and in somber recognition of the seven courageous members of the *Lily Jean*, who were lost at sea when the 72-foot groundfish trawler sank in the frigid waters off Gloucester, Massachusetts, last Friday.

For more than 400 years, Gloucester fishermen have braved the Atlantic to feed our Nation. Fishing is not just an industry in Gloucester; it is the backbone of the community, woven into families, neighborhoods, and generations through shared sacrifice.

Today, the Gloucester community and the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts mourn the loss of Captain Accursio "Gus" Sanfilippo, his crew, and an NOAA observer. In a town where everyone knows someone who fishes, a tragedy like this is felt in every home, on every dock, and along every wharf.

Captain Sanfilippo was a fifth-generation commercial fisherman, a veteran of the sea, and a mentor to young fishermen just starting out. He took countless aspiring fishermen under his wing, sharing not just his knowledge, but his love for the water and the traditions of the trade.

Deckhands Paul Beal, Sr., and Jr. also understood that fishing is not simply a job, but a calling passed down through generations. Paul, Sr. began fishing while still in high school and shared that passion with his son, working side by side on the water.

We also remember crew members John Paul Rousanidis, Sean Therrien, and Freeman Short, men lauded for their hard work, commitment to family, and generosity to others. Finally, we honor Jada Sammitt, a recent college graduate serving as an NOAA federal observer, who chose public service and scientific stewardship as her calling.

While the *Lily Jean's* dedicated crew could not be saved, we owe our deepest gratitude to the U.S. Coast Guard for their relentless efforts, searching more than 1,000 square miles using aircraft, cutters, and small boats. Their sense of duty is profound, and we know they too carry the weight of this tremendous loss.

While nothing can bring Captain Gus and the crew of the *Lily Jean* back to their families

and communities, we owe it to them, and to every fisherman who heads out before dawn, to ensure that this vital and dangerous work is respected, valued, and supported.

Fishing is not just an occupation. It is a way of life, built on hard work, risk, and an enduring love for the sea. Fishermen often say they have salt in their blood. The love we have for our Gloucester fishermen runs deep in our hearts too.

My thoughts and prayers are with the families and loved ones of the crew of the *Lily Jean*, and we stand with the entire Gloucester community as they grieve this loss during this heartbreaking time.

EXPERT TESTIMONY DURING THE CONGRESSIONAL FIELD HEARING ON HAITIAN TPS TERMINATION

HON. AYANNA PRESSLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, as part of the Congressional Field Hearing on Haitian TPS Termination held in the Massachusetts 7th Congressional District, experts from the community were invited to discuss the importance of extending TPS for Haitian nationals. Therefore, I include in the RECORD their testimonies:

TESTIMONY OF ATTORNEY MIRIAN ALBERT OF LAWYERS FOR CIVIL RIGHTS TO THE CONGRESSIONAL FIELD HEARING ON THE TERMINATION OF HAITIAN TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS

Lawyers for Civil Rights ("LCR") advocates for communities of color and immigrants through legal action, education, and economic empowerment. On March 3, 2025, LCR filed a federal lawsuit to block the termination of Temporary Protected Status ("TPS") for Haitian and Venezuelan immigrants. The lawsuit was brought on behalf of three immigrant advocacy organizations—Haitians Americans United, Inc. ("HAU"), Venezuelan Association of Massachusetts ("VAM"), UndocuBlack Network ("UBN")—and four individual TPS holders. Today, LCR urges Congress to act to preserve humane immigration protections like TPS. Without those protections, the consequences will be severe, forcing families into crisis, undermining local economies, and pushing communities into unnecessary instability.

TPS for Haiti was first designated in 2010, after a catastrophic earthquake. Extensions continued over many years in recognition of Haiti's ongoing instability and humanitarian needs. The designation was most recently extended through February 3, 2026, under a Biden-era decision, reflecting the reality that the conditions prompting the original designation have not meaningfully improved. In February 2025, the Trump Administration attempted to shorten that designation through a "partial vacatur," purporting to cut the TPS period by six months. A federal court ruled the action unlawful and restored the February 3, 2026 expiration date. Despite this ruling, in late 2025, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced it would not renew Haiti's TPS designation beyond that date.

LCR strongly condemned this decision. Terminating TPS amid Haiti's ongoing crisis—including widespread gang violence, political instability, and economic collapse—ignores conditions that even the U.S. State Department continues to warn make travel unsafe. The consequences of this decision are