

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I missed the votes on Monday, February 9, 2026, due to travel complications. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 57, and YEA on Roll Call No. 58.

HONORING DR. VALMADGE R.
TOWNER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and accomplishments of Dr. Valmadge R. Towner, an educator, pastor, and the President of Coahoma Community College in Clarksdale, Mississippi. A son of the Mississippi Delta, Dr. Towner, has devoted his career to advancing opportunities for students and families across the region, combining academic rigor, steady leadership, and a deep commitment to community.

Raised in Marks and Clarksdale, Dr. Towner comes from a family of educators and is a third-generation teacher. His early education at St. Elizabeth's Catholic School and graduation from Quitman County High School set the stage for a lifetime of service rooted in the Delta's values of perseverance, faith, and neighborly care. He and his wife, Natasha Brown Towner, chose to remain in the Delta, embodying a deliberate commitment to uplift the communities that shaped them.

Dr. Towner's academic preparation reflects both breadth and depth. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics, a Master's in Mathematics, and a Master's in Administration from Alcorn State University. He further pursued theological study with a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey and completed a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership at the University of Mississippi. This foundation has equipped him to lead with both analytical precision and moral purpose.

Before assuming the presidency of Coahoma Community College in 2013, Dr. Towner served students in multiple capacities. He began as a college mathematics instructor and contributed to collegiate athletics as a head baseball coach and assistant football coach. In K-12 education, he served as a principal and superintendent for Quitman County Schools and as Director of Pupil Services for DeSoto County Schools. A lifelong learner, he is known for reflective practices—regular study and writing—that inform a disciplined, student-centered approach to leadership.

At Coahoma Community College, Dr. Towner has guided the institution through challenging fiscal periods with prudence and accountability. He prioritized aligning expenditures with revenues, safeguarding a strong fund balance, and ensuring day-to-day practices reflect responsible stewardship. His administration improved campus safety through

security fencing and gate enhancements and fostered a culture of teamwork and adaptability emblematic of the Delta's resourcefulness. These efforts supported a significant enrollment turnaround, including a twenty percent increase in a single year, and reaffirmed the college's vital role in workforce development and transfer education for the region.

Beyond his duties on campus, Dr. Towner serves as pastor of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Greenwood, a congregation he has known since childhood. His civic leadership has been recognized by the Coahoma County and Mississippi State Conferences of the NAACP for exemplary service on higher education issues, and he has been named Citizen of the Year for Leflore County.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Valmadge R. Towner exemplifies the best of public service—steadfast in faith, committed to students, and devoted to the Mississippi Delta. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring his distinguished service and ongoing contributions to education and community.

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA WEEK

HON. GREGORY F. MURPHY

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Future Business Leaders of America. I include in the RECORD the following proclamation:

Whereas, Future Business Leaders of America, Inc. (FBLA) is a non-profit educational organization whose first chapter was established in Johnson City, Tennessee, in 1942; and

Whereas, Iowa became FBLA's first state chapter in 1947; and

Whereas, Junius H. Rose officially chartered its FBLA local chapter on January 21, 1969; and

Whereas, FBLA includes more than 250,000 members and advisers in 4,600 chapters nationwide in middle schools, high schools, colleges, universities, career and technical schools, and private business schools; and

Whereas, FBLA is a professional business organization dedicated to bringing business and education together in a positive working relationship through innovative leadership and career development programs; and

Whereas, FBLA members perform community service activities and strive to build a student's understanding of the realities of the modern business world; and

Whereas, FBLA teaches middle school, high school, and college students basic business and leadership principles; and assists them in the transition from school to work; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved that I, Greg Murphy, M.D., United States Representative for North Carolina's 3rd Congressional District, recognize February 9-15, 2026, as National FBLA Week in North Carolina's 3rd Congressional District, in recognition of the activities and efforts led by the students at J.H. Rose High School.

CONGRATULATING SOUTH DAKOTA'S GREY ZABEL AND THE SEATTLE SEAHAWKS ON SUPER BOWL LX WIN

HON. DUSTY JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate South Dakota's own Grey Zabel and the Seattle Seahawks on their Super Bowl LX victory on February 8, 2026.

Grey Zabel was born and raised in Pierre, South Dakota. After graduating from T.F. Riggs High School and helping the Governors win three State Championships, he was recruited to play football at North Dakota State University.

At North Dakota State, Zabel helped lead the Bison to two NCAA Division I FCS National Championships in 2021 and 2024. In 2024, he earned First Team FCS All-American honors at left tackle, capping off an outstanding collegiate career.

After an impressive collegiate performance at North Dakota State, the Seattle Seahawks selected Zabel in the first round, 18th overall, in the 2025 NFL draft. As a rookie offensive lineman, he started at guard and tackle, playing in all 17 regular-season games and three postseason games during Seattle's Super Bowl LX championship run. He proved highly effective, allowing only two sacks over 580 pass-blocking snaps during the season and recording seven games without a single pressure allowed.

I am proud to recognize Grey Zabel's outstanding perseverance and his impact as a role model for athletes and individuals across the Nation. He is an inspiring reminder of the strength found in determination and hard work. I congratulate Grey Zabel and the Seattle Seahawks on their remarkable victory.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MARGARETHE "GRETHE" CAMMERMEYER

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate Colonel Margarethe "Grethe" Cammermeyer's contributions to LGBTQ rights and neuroscience nursing in the United States.

Born in Oslo, Norway, Grethe became a citizen in 1960 and joined the Army Nurse Corps in 1961 when she was just 19 years old. After finishing college, she served on active duty as an Army nurse in Germany, the U.S. and Vietnam. She later earned a master's degree and Ph.D. from the University of Washington's School of Nursing. She served concurrent careers in VA medical centers, the Army Reserves and the National Guard.

In 1988, while answering a question during a routine security clearance interview, Grethe disclosed that she was a lesbian. The National Guard then began military discharge proceedings against her, but Grethe challenged this action in federal court. In June 1994, a

federal court ruled that her discharge and the ban on gays and lesbians serving in the military were unconstitutional, paving the way for future LGBTQ service members in our armed services. After returning to the National Guard, she served courageously as one of the few openly gay or lesbian people in the U.S. military until her retirement in 1997.

Grethe is a decorated member of the U.S. military and a nationally recognized practitioner of neuroscience nursing. With a focus on neuroscience, she has been an active researcher and author or contributor to dozens of publications. She has been recognized as the Veterans Administration Nurse of the Year in 1985, earned the Bronze Star for Service in Vietnam, and was Chief Nurse of the Washington National Guard.

Throughout her career, she challenged policies that discriminated against married women and married women who became pregnant. In 2010, after 17 years of advocating for the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell", Colonel Cammermeyer led the Pledge of Allegiance during President Obama's ceremony repealing the policy. Gay men and women are now allowed to serve openly in the military because of her determination and persistence. In 2012, after same-sex marriage was legalized in Washington State, Grethe and her partner Diane Divelbess became the first same-sex couple to receive a license in Island County. Grethe is not just celebrated among her Island County neighbors but recognized nationwide for her contributions to LGBTQ rights.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to commend Grethe for her outstanding courage, dedication to expanding the field of neuroscience nursing and enduring legacy of service to her community. I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing our deepest gratitude for her service.

RECOGNIZING THE JENKINS
DONELSON FOUNDATION FOR 10
YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. EUGENE SIMON VINDMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Mr. VINDMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the Jenkins Donelson

Foundation (JDF) located in Stafford, Virginia for their decade of service to the communities of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia.

Since 2016, the Jenkins Donelson Foundation have worked to promote health and healthy lifestyles for the homeless, veterans, and underserved communities. Over the years, they have provided socks, shoes, foot care supplies, clothing, blankets, beds/bedding, kitchenware, bathroom goods, and toys.

In addition to their core activities, the JDF recently began hosting The Robert E. Jenkins Scholastic Chess Tournament, named after co-founder Robert Jenkins, who was an avid chess player. These tournaments help students develop decision-making and strategic thinking skills, which help improve their mental and physical well-being.

The JDF has also hosted numerous interactive Health Fairs, offering critical information on diabetes, hypertension, healthy eating, and foot health. Most notably, the JDF was recognized as a Top-Rated Nonprofit by Great Nonprofits, a prestigious recognition that reflects their unwavering dedication to serving our community.

I want to thank all the board members and volunteers that play a crucial role in making sure our communities have access to these necessary resources.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating and honoring the Jenkins Donelson Foundation for their ten years of service in our community. I look forward to witnessing their continued impact in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING RONNIE TORRES

HON. GABE VASQUEZ

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Mr. VASQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ronnie Torres for his outstanding contributions to Belen, New Mexico. Ronnie is an exceptional citizen and neighbor who tirelessly dedicates his time and energy to improving his local community.

Ronnie was born and raised in a small community south of Belen in Jarales, New Mexico.

From an early age, he learned the value of hard work and getting involved in his community, and these values shine through in all he does today. Over forty years ago, Ronnie opened his own business, Hair Innovations, where he provides salon services and keeps New Mexicans feeling like the best versions of themselves to this very day.

Keeping a small business open in today's economic environment is no small feat, and Ronnie has endured many challenges along the way, such as dealing with a recent car crash into his storefront. Hair Innovations temporarily relocated while Ronnie is rebuilding, but he is bouncing back with perseverance and his neighbors' support—embodying the grit and resilience that is so core to who we are as New Mexicans.

As a self-made business owner, it is clear Ronnie strongly believes in giving back to his community and creating experiences for other people that he did not have growing up. He is involved throughout the community, including serving on the local Chamber Board and later becoming its president. In this role, Ronnie was integral in establishing the Miracle on Main Street Electric Christmas Parade, which is now celebrated across New Mexico and in other parts of the country.

Ronnie also served as a member of the Belen City Council and as former Mayor of the City of Belen for over fifteen years. During his mayorship, he worked on amazing projects, such as renovating the Harvey House Museum, establishing a Festival of Trees, and providing the long-time display of the Bugg Lights. His work has not only improved the city but established a community where people can look forward to raising their children, supporting their neighbors, and being proud to call Belen home.

On behalf of the people of New Mexico's 2nd Congressional District, I would like to thank Ronnie Torres. We are grateful for his heartfelt contributions to Belen and his continued dedication to improving the lives of New Mexicans.