

Her efforts ensure that the legacy of African-American resilience, creativity, and heritage is not only preserved but remains a living, breathing part of our public education. This museum stands as a testament to her belief that understanding where we have been is essential to determining where we are going.

Whether she is writing children's books to honor the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen through her publishing house, TwoBee Publishing, or coaching a client toward a new career path, LaVon Stennis-Williams is a builder of dreams.

LaVon Stennis-Williams has made extraordinary contributions to Nebraska's 2nd District and we are grateful for her tireless work in preserving our Nation's history while empowering its future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on March 17, 2026, as I was detained due to unforeseen inclement weather causing extended flight cancellations, prohibiting me from arriving for the first vote series of the week. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 88, H.R. 4294, Mitigation and Watermen Support Act of 2025; YEA on Roll Call No. 89, S. 3971, Small Business Innovation and Economic Security Act; YEA on Roll Call No. 90, H. Res. 1115, Ordering the previous question; and YEA on Roll Call No. 91, H. Res. 1115, Agreeing to the Resolution.

HONORING CHANCELLOR SHARON GABER

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chancellor Sharon Gaber for her selection as the Charlotte Business Journal's 2025 Business Person of the Year. Chancellor Gaber is an extraordinary leader representing an equally extraordinary institution in the great state of North Carolina—one that also happens to be my alma mater.

I have personally known every one of the chancellors who have led UNC Charlotte. Each was an exceptional leader, with particular gifts who served our university at the perfect time. Chancellor Gaber continues this legacy. She is a driven visionary who excels at building teams and inspiring excellence in others.

Under the leadership of Chancellor Gaber, UNC Charlotte has experienced record enrollment, achieved R1 research status, and made major strategic investments to transform the university and the region it serves.

This progress is not happening in isolation. UNC Charlotte has become a powerful engine for economic growth—driving innovation, workforce development, and research partnerships that benefit North Carolina and the country. From expanding access to higher education,

to supporting cutting-edge research, Chancellor Gaber has positioned UNC Charlotte as a model for how public universities can thrive.

I congratulate Chancellor Gaber and the entire UNC Charlotte community on this well-deserved recognition and their continued impact. It is fitting that her leadership has been recognized with the Charlotte Business Journal's 2025 Business Person of the Year award. This is a proud moment for the 49ers community.

I would like to once again congratulate Chancellor Gaber and recognize the tremendous contributions she has made to UNC Charlotte and the state of North Carolina.

TRIBUTE TO MARTIN LOUIS "MICK" GIVEN

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend to the House the memory of Martin Louis "Mick" Given of Sidney, Ohio. A longtime business leader and philanthropist, Mick passed away on February 4, 2026, on his sixty-ninth birthday.

Mick was born in 1957 to the late Thomas and Marvalene Given. A lifelong resident of Sidney, he was a 1975 graduate of Sidney High School and a 1979 graduate of the University of Dayton. He then began a nearly five-decade career with Ferguson Construction Company, starting as an estimator/project manager. Tapped as president in 2001, he was named chief executive officer and board chairman in 2018.

Mick's standard of work excellence was a model to all. Under his leadership and drive, Ferguson grew to become the region's fourth-largest commercial construction firm, with more than 300 employees. Mick cared passionately about helping Shelby County to grow and develop. He served as board chairman of the Sidney-Shelby County Workforce Partnership, which encouraged young people in the region to pursue careers in the construction industry. His commitment to future generations earned him honors from the Sidney City School District, which inducted him into its Hall of Honor in 2017. He was also a longtime Associated Builders and Contractors board member.

Mick is survived by his wife, Vickie; their three children, Brent, Jackie, and Leslie; and seven grandchildren. On behalf of the people of Ohio's 4th Congressional District, and in conjunction with my Ohio colleagues MIKE CAREY and WARREN DAVIDSON, I offer Mick's family my condolences as they celebrate his life and his many contributions to the region. We can all be grateful that good men like Mick Given dedicate their lives to serving others, giving back so much more than they receive.

RECOGNIZING RUTSHELLE GUILLAUME IN HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. SHEILA CHERFILUS-McCORMICK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rutshelle

Guillaume in honor of Women's History Month. I include in the RECORD the following proclamation in her honor.

Whereas, Rutshelle Guillaume is a Haitian singer and songwriter whose powerful voice, captivating performances, and unique musical talent have made her a leading figure in Haitian music; and

Whereas, born and raised in Haiti in a musical family, Rutshelle cultivated her passion for singing at a young age, performing at local events and talent competitions, and developing the artistry that would define her career; and

Whereas, over the course of her career, Rutshelle has released multiple albums showcasing her distinctive style, upbeat energy, and inspiring messages, resonating with audiences across Haiti and internationally; and

Whereas, Rutshelle has earned a reputation as a dynamic performer, captivating audiences with her live performances and inspiring others through her dedication to her craft and her commitment to creating meaningful music; and

Whereas, beyond her musical achievements, Rutshelle is a passionate advocate for social causes, using her platform to raise awareness and make a positive impact in her community, both in Haiti and abroad; and

Whereas, her remarkable achievements have earned her numerous awards and accolades, including recognition as one of the top female artists in Haiti, while her humility, work ethic, and dedication continue to inspire fans and fellow artists alike; and therefore, be it

Resolved, that we, Florida's 20th Congressional District, proudly recognize and honor Rutshelle Guillaume during Women's History Month for her exceptional talent, dedication, and contributions to music and the community, inspiring others through her example of artistry, perseverance, and leadership.

HONORING KENNETH "KEN" KELLY

HON. SAM T. LICCARDO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Mr. LICCARDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Kenneth "Ken" Kelly of San José, who passed away on August 7, 2025, at age 86. Ken Kelly served as a beloved volunteer and community leader in Silicon Valley. For decades, he devoted his time and talents to helping others. In schools, neighborhood groups, and environmental programs, he rolled up his sleeves and got to work.

Ken was born in Nebraska and raised in San Francisco. He graduated from UC Berkeley in 1961. He worked in retail management and later ran his own marketing business, but he left his deepest mark in the garden. In later years, Ken became a Master Composter and led Santa Clara County's Home Composting Education Program. He taught neighbors of all ages how to turn kitchen scraps into rich soil. Through hands-on workshops and the trees and plants he propagated and shared, Ken spread both seedlings and enthusiasm for environmental stewardship.

His daily work scratched an itch that Ken had for community service, but not nearly enough. For a duration of a couple of decades, nobody in San José volunteered in more

ways and invested more hours in leading, organizing, convening, helping, and supporting. He served as president of the Blackford Neighborhood Action Coalition and built an extensive network of relationships with other neighborhood leaders throughout the region. As part of that work, Ken co-founded the successful Responsible Landlord Engagement Initiative, to help neighbors in underserved communities work together to nudge, encourage, and shame landlords to engage in improving their blighted properties. He served on and led the San José Small Business Advisory Task Force, where he advocated for the many immigrant-led small businesses that shape San José's unique character. He led United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County, helping other communities to organize, lift their voices, engage in self-help, and make local democracy work. Ken also served as an ambassador for the San José, Campbell, and Gilroy Chambers of Commerce, participated in his alma mater's Lowell High School Alumni Association, very actively supported Crime Stoppers and the Salvation Army, and advanced education and literacy through the San José Library Commission and the Friends of the Bascom Library. Simply, Ken failed at retirement—colossally.

Those who knew Ken remember his quick wit and easy charm. He told a good joke at any gathering—whether speaking to adults in a classroom or entertaining children in a school garden. Strangers quickly became friends. A few minutes with Ken often meant a smile, a new lesson about composting, and a renewed appreciation for community.

For all he accomplished, Ken's greatest pride was his family and the marriage at the center of it. In 1999, Ken married Linda LeZotte, a longtime, distinguished public servant and former San José City Councilmember and Santa Clara Valley Water District board member. Like so many spouses of elected officials, Ken's support of Linda and her work constituted a very substantial community service of its own. Together, Linda and Ken built a 26-year marriage filled with community engagement, and with travel and fun. Ken was predeceased by his son Joel and is survived by Linda, along with a wide circle of loving family members, nieces, nephews, cousins, and countless friends and volunteers who felt like family.

Whether planting a garden with schoolchildren, mentoring a new volunteer, or sharing a laugh, Ken strengthened our community. Ken said that neighbors are family. Today, our Silicon Valley family mourns the loss of a family member and honors his life of service.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CAROLYN VERMONT

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of the indelible Carolyn Vermont of Bridgeport, Connecticut.

As Members of Congress, we spend every day representing constituents to the best of our ability, attempting to balance competing interests, voices, and opinions. Today is a rare day when I know, as it relates to Carolyn Vermont, there is unanimity among those I

have the privilege of representing: she was beloved—for who she was, for how much of herself she was willing to give to her city, for the affection she held for her neighbors, and for her zest for life.

Carolyn devoted her life to serving others, always eager to tackle another structural impediment or injustice which prevented any in her community from flourishing. She helped families achieve stability through homeownership as CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County, fought for racial justice as President of the Bridgeport NAACP, improved safety as chair of Bridgeport's Task Force on Gun Violence Prevention and Intervention, and promoted education as a trustee for Fairfield University, her alma mater.

Carolyn also served as President of the Bridgeport Rotary Club, was a member of the National Coalition for 100 Black Women, and was involved with the Fairfield Community Foundation and her local chapter of the Urban League. She was an unstoppable force for good in the City of Bridgeport who constantly thought in terms of community.

For all the good she did, Mr. Speaker, I want to impress upon you just how good she was. Spending a moment in Carolyn's presence brought you instant joy, lasting motivation to serve others, and the certainty of taking a selfie together. Hundreds—possibly even thousands—of my constituents have selfies with Carolyn hugging them tightly and smiling ear to ear. I know, since her passing, many of us have scrolled back to those photos to bid our friend farewell.

I would like to extend my sincere condolences to the Vermont family. We in Connecticut owe her an immense debt of gratitude for sharing Carolyn with us. She will not soon be forgotten. Trust that I, along with many others, will be there to carry on her legacy—manifested in the organizations she helped build, the initiatives she led, the people she believed in, and the city she loved.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF A DEDICATED BALTIMOREAN PUBLIC SERVANT, MRS. ELLA HILLEN PIERCE

HON. KWEISI MFUME

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mrs. Ella Hillen Pierce, a devoted civil servant who dedicated herself to the City of Baltimore and its people. Mrs. Ella Hillen Pierce was a long-time employee and respected leader in Baltimore's Bureau of Purchases, and her integrity and professionalism in her many roles will not soon be forgotten. A symbol of resilience and a beloved mentor to many of her colleagues, Mrs. Pierce passed away on January 25, 2026, at the age of 98. She will be deeply missed by all those who had the privilege of knowing and working alongside her.

Mrs. Pierce was a bright and inquisitive child, one of five Hillen siblings who affectionately referred to themselves as the "Fab Five." Following her graduation from high school, she stayed close to her Baltimore roots and pursued a higher education at Catonsville Community College, Howard Univer-

sity, Morgan State College (now Morgan State University), and Johns Hopkins University.

Mrs. Pierce used the skills and qualifications that she gained through her schooling to pursue a barrier-breaking career in public procurement. She began her professional journey as a Purchasing Agent at Morgan State, remaining there for 19 years before becoming the first African American hired as a Buyer in Baltimore's Bureau of Purchases. There, she quickly distinguished herself through her confidence, professionalism, and work ethic, earning the admiration of her colleagues. Rising steadily through the ranks, she ultimately made history in 1987 as the first woman and the first African American to serve as Baltimore City's Purchasing Agent.

In that same year, Mrs. Pierce earned the first of many accolades from her peers in the public procurement industry when she was named the "Buyer of the Year" by the Maryland Public Purchasing Association. In 1999, she earned the National Institute of Government Purchasing's (NIGP) prestigious Albert M. Hall Award, and just 3 years later she was named a Fellow of NIGP. In 2020, at the end of a long and distinguished career, she received NIGP's Inclusion and Diversity Award. The following year, the award was renamed the Ella Pierce Award in her honor, a fitting tribute to her trailblazing career and its lasting impact.

Though her professional accomplishments were numerous, Mrs. Pierce was also deeply devoted to her family and her community. While she had no children of her own, close friends and loved ones were known to call her "Mom," in recognition of her warmth, generosity, and compassion. She loved to travel and took great joy in sharing those experiences with the people she loved.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and legacy of this dedicated public servant. Mrs. Ella Hillen Pierce was a pillar of her community, and she is deeply missed by all those she leaves behind. I offer my sincerest condolences to her nieces and nephews, as well as to her extended family, friends, colleagues, and all those who had the privilege of knowing her.

RECOGNIZING SOPHIE TRAINOR KHANAHMADI

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sophie Trainor Khanahmadi for her service to the 2nd District of Kentucky, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the United States Congress.

A native of Memphis, Tennessee, and graduate of The University of Alabama, Sophie's tenure spans a career of over fifteen years on Capitol Hill. I was blessed to have had her serve in my office for nearly a decade, working her way up from Health Policy Advisor to Legislative Director and Chief of Staff before joining the House Committee on Energy and Commerce as Deputy Staff Director after managing my successful race to become Chairman.

In her current role, Sophie has always been a trusted advisor to the members of the committee and a strong leader for all levels of the