

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

DEFENDING AMERICAN PROPERTY  
ABROAD ACT OF 2026

SPEECH OF

**HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, March 27, 2026*

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the Defending American Property Abroad Act, a bipartisan effort to protect the property rights of American companies operating overseas.

Mexico's ongoing efforts to control a deep-water port owned by U.S.-based Vulcan Material Company not only puts American jobs at risk, but it is a direct violation of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

We must enact proper safeguards to provide our businesses the certainty needed to operate without fear of unlawful asset or property seizure.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Defending American Property Abroad Act.

With this bill, we will reinforce the rule of law, protect our supply chains, and assure that American businesses continue to create jobs and grow our economy.

CELEBRATING PATRICIA STANO'S  
100TH BIRTHDAY

**HON. GLENN THOMPSON**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 6, 2026*

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Patricia Stano's 100th Birthday on April 13th. Patricia is a long-time resident of Pleasant Gap, Pennsylvania, and an outstanding community member with almost half-a-century of service as a nurse.

Patricia was born in Greenville, Pennsylvania, the daughter of Paul and Petrina Matusz. She and her husband, Joseph, married in 1948. Through 60 years of marriage, Patricia and Joseph welcomed two children: Suzanne Freyer and Elizabeth Hoopes. Patricia has two grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.

Patricia was a student at St. Michael's Catholic School in Greenville and then attended St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in Pittsburgh during World War II.

For more than 40 years, Patricia dedicated her life to caring for others. She held various roles at the Greenville hospital, and the Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad Company.

Outside of the hospital, Patricia helped run a local 4-H club in Mercer County, sharing her love for sewing, cooking, and crafts with local students.

Congratulations to Patricia on this magnificent milestone. I wish her a happy 100th birthday, and may God bless her and her family.

RECOGNIZING MELISSA  
ARCENEUX

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 6, 2026*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary individual whose quiet dedication, compassion, and tireless service are remarkable, Melissa Arceneaux. Melissa's impact extends far beyond what most people see. She balances a remarkable array of responsibilities with grace and purpose. As a devoted mother to a daughter with autism, she navigates the unique joys and challenges of parenting with patience, advocacy, and deep love. She also serves as a caregiver to seniors in her community, offering companionship, dignity, and kindness to those who need it most—while making time to lift up countless others. Her service is not just something she does; it is who she is.

Beyond her personal commitments, Melissa leads the nonprofit Autism Everywhere, where she works tirelessly to create opportunities, support, and awareness for families and individuals in the autism community. Fueled by lived experience and deep empathy, she approaches every project with determination, authenticity, and hope. Melissa does not seek recognition; she simply sees needs and works to meet them, transforming lives quietly but profoundly. In her professional life, Melissa brings the same energy, positivity, and integrity to our studio. She fosters organization amid chaos, warmth where it is needed most, and inclusion for all. Her commitment to accessibility ensures that underserved communities feel welcomed, valued, and empowered. Her example inspires everyone around her to do more, care more, and dream bigger.

What makes Melissa a hero is not a single grand gesture, but the countless small ones: the extra time she gives, the listening ear she offers, and the way she lifts others without expectation. Through action, compassion, and integrity, she demonstrates that true leadership is rooted in service.

In a world that often celebrates loud accomplishments, Melissa embodies the quiet, enduring heroism that truly changes lives. For her extraordinary dedication to her family, her community, my nonprofit, and her own nonprofit, I am honored to recognize Melissa Arceneaux as a 2026 Hero Among Us. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring her for her unwavering commitment, her selfless leadership, and the profound, lasting impact she has made on our community.

HONORING THE COLLEGE OF  
MARIN

**HON. JARED HUFFMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 6, 2026*

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the College of Marin on the momentous occasion of its centennial anniversary and in appreciation for a century of quality education provided to the communities of Marin County and the Bay Area.

Over the last 100 years, College of Marin has served as a cornerstone of higher education in Marin County, providing accessible opportunities to students of diverse social and economic backgrounds. Founded in 1926 as the Marin Junior College, the school was the product of a Tamalpais Union High School District college initiative supported by the San Rafael High School District and established by popular vote. The Tamalpais Union High School District leased the 13-acre Butler tract in Kentfield, establishing the campus, which would grow into more than 400 acres across multiple campuses.

The Marin Junior College's first class of 87 students began with six faculty members in 1926 under the leadership of president A.C. Olney. Throughout the 1930s, the campus grew, acquiring more property and continuing to expand its arts and athletics programs. During World War II, Marin Junior College offered military support and training, including courses at the Hamilton Army Airfield. In 1948 it was renamed the College of Marin. Responding to growing national interest in more comprehensive, personalized education, the College began a new expansion initiative in the 1960s. By 1962, enrollment had grown to 2,500 students and in 1971, the school established its Indian Valley campus in Novato.

Today, the College of Marin offers 469 degrees and certificates. This includes their workforce development programs that support employment in critical, high-demand fields like healthcare and skilled trades. The school continues to adapt and innovate to provide programs best tailored to support a diversity of students, including undocumented, first generation, and older adult students. College of Marin also boasts the highest transfer acceptance rate for the University of California Berkeley with approximately 40 percent of applicants admitted in the past two years. Beyond its students, the school's impact on California's economy is undeniable, including providing nearly 800 jobs and \$9 million in tax revenue.

The College of Marin has been a pioneering institution in our region, renowned for its strong dedication to student success and equity for decades. The College of Marin Foundation offers over 150 scholarships annually and last year announced the establishment of the Jay Pritzker Foundation Centennial Endowment Fund, a \$20 million fund to support students' critical non-tuition related expenses,

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

including healthcare, childcare, computers, and food.

A vital institution of higher learning for the Bay Area, the College of Marin is worthy of the highest commendation. Mr. Speaker, please join us in recognizing the College of Marin on the occasion of its 100th anniversary and offering the College our best wishes for another century of success.

HONORING KENNETH O. EDWARDS

**HON. ANDRÉ CARSON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 6, 2026*

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Kenneth O. "Kenny" Edwards upon the occasion of his retirement after 36 years of dedicated service to the railroad industry and to the working men and women of Indiana.

Born and raised in Peru, Indiana, Mr. Edwards is a proud fifth-generation railroader whose life's work reflects a deep commitment to safety, fairness, and the dignity of labor. Over the course of his distinguished career, he has become a respected leader and tireless advocate for railroad workers, earning the trust and admiration of colleagues across the state and nation.

Since 2009, Mr. Edwards has served as the Indiana State Legislative Director for the SMART Transportation Division, where he has championed policies that protect workers and strengthen our rail infrastructure. With more than three decades of service as a union officer, he has played a critical role in advancing rail safety initiatives, improving working conditions, and supporting infrastructure projects that benefit both workers and communities.

His leadership has helped secure important protections for train crews, including safeguarding their privacy in the wake of tragic incidents. He has also advocated for common-sense safety improvements, like reducing train lengths and enhancing rail yard conditions. Throughout his career, Mr. Edwards has exemplified the very best of public service through his advocacy, integrity, and unwavering dedication to others.

Mr. Speaker, Kenneth O. Edwards has devoted his life to uplifting working families and strengthening one of our nation's most vital industries. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring his remarkable career and in wishing him continued success and fulfillment in his well-earned retirement.

RECOGNIZING STAFF SERGEANT  
PHILLIP COOK

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 6, 2026*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to recognize 100-year-old Staff Sergeant Phillip Bruce Cook, a proven patriotic resident of Lexington, South Carolina, on his reception of the French Legion of Honor medal, as well as his invaluable contribution to victory in World War II.

Staff Sgt. Cook is receiving the French Legion of Honor medal for a career of profound

courage and leadership as he served as a member of the U.S. Army Air Force 379th Bomb Group, 524th Bomb Squadron.

Staff Sgt. Cook was born in Swansea, South Carolina, on September 23, 1925, and from a young age, he had a passion for flying. At just 17 years old, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps and received training as an aerial gunner.

Based in England, his first combat mission was in 1944 as a ball turret gunner flying over France. This was a particularly dangerous role aboard a B-17 bomber.

Over the course of his service, Staff Sgt. Cook flew a total of 35 missions.

The combat record of the 379th was the most successful of all the Eighth Air Force heavy bomber groups. The unit held records as far as bomb tonnage dropped—26,459 tons—more than any other group, including those in operation before the 379th even arrived in England.

Staff Sgt. Cook was honorably discharged in 1945. Following the war, he returned to Lexington and attended a trade school to learn how to repair watches and clocks.

A graduate of Swansea High School, he is married, has two children, and attends Northside Baptist Church in Lexington.

Due to his outstanding sense of courage and commitment, he will be receiving the French Legion of Honor medal on April 9th, 2026, at the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation in Columbia. This medal is the highest and most prestigious French national order of merit and recognizes those brave men and women who have done great deeds for France. Following a comprehensive examination of his military record and post war life experiences, French President Emmanuel Macron approved his application.

I am grateful to Staff Sgt. Cook for his incredible service and unwavering dedication to America. I wish him and his family all the best.

HONORING OF DECATUR COUNTY  
TENNESSEE

**HON. MATT VAN EPPS**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 6, 2026*

Mr. VAN EPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the people of Decatur County, Tennessee, for their extraordinary display of unity, service, and selflessness during the recent Winter Storm Fern.

As this powerful storm moved across our state, it left behind widespread damage and uncertainty for many communities. In Decatur County, the response was immediate and inspiring. Local agencies, first responders, volunteers, and faith-based organizations came together with a shared purpose to care for their neighbors. They worked long hours in difficult conditions, putting the needs of others before their own and ensuring that no one was left behind.

This was not driven by a desire for recognition or praise, but by a deep-rooted commitment to one another and to the community they call home. This quiet dedication speaks volumes about the character of the people who call Decatur County home.

Through these collective efforts, the people of Decatur County played a critical role in

helping ensure the safety of their community throughout the storm. Their actions reflect the power of neighbors looking out for neighbors and demonstrate how preparation, compassion, and resilience can make all the difference in times of crisis.

In moments of hardship, we often witness the very best of the American spirit. Decatur County demonstrated that spirit in full. The people of Decatur County's actions serve as a powerful reminder that strong communities are built not just in times of prosperity, but in how people respond when challenges arise.

It is my honor to recognize Decatur County for its remarkable response and unwavering commitment to service during Winter Storm Fern. Decatur's residents epitomized Tennessee's volunteer spirit. You made us all proud. Your example is one that deserves to be remembered and one that should inspire communities across our Nation.

May we all strive to embody the same spirit of service, humility, and unity that the people of Decatur County so clearly displayed.

CONGRATULATING CONNOR HILL

**HON. GLENN THOMPSON**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 6, 2026*

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Connor Hill of Port Matilda, Pennsylvania. Connor recently won the Regeneron Science Talent Search competition.

The Regeneron Science Talent Search is one of the oldest math and science competitions in our nation. Each year, high school seniors across the country are invited to compete.

For 84 years, this competition has inspired students to address global issues. Connor is a senior at Delta High School in State College, Pennsylvania. He was among the 40 finalists who were invited to Washington, D.C. earlier this month to present their final projects. The 40 finalists received more than \$1.8 million in awards. Connor received the top award of \$250,000 dollars.

Connor's research solved a long-standing mathematical mystery by identifying every possible "noble polyhedron." This is a shape where every face and corner is identical. Connor created a computer program to analyze how these shapes can exist. He discovered 146 unique examples.

Congratulations to Connor on this amazing accomplishment.

HONORING THE 35 YEARS OF  
SERVICE OF DR. RITO SILVA

**HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 6, 2026*

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of Dr. Rito Silva, a student-centric and visionary leader in the academic field.

Dr. Silva has served his community of Alice, Texas, as councilman and mayor for a combined seven years. Dr. Silva is proud to be a