

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MR. JOE "FLASH" LERMA

**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2026

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Joe "Flash" Lerma for his outstanding service and dedication to public transportation and safety in Laredo, Texas, as he marks his well-earned retirement from El Metro Transit System.

For 33 remarkable years, Mr. Lerma served the City of Laredo with distinction, contributing to the growth and reliability of El Metro Transit, a vital system that connects our community and supports thousands of residents each day.

Throughout his career, he demonstrated a deep commitment to excellence, professionalism, and the well-being of others.

As Safety Training Coordinator, Mr. Lerma played a critical role in ensuring that operators and staff were properly trained and equipped to serve the public safely and efficiently.

His leadership helped foster a culture of accountability and care, strengthening the foundation of one of Laredo's most essential public services. Beyond his professional accomplishments, Mr. Lerma built lasting relationships across departments, earning the respect and admiration of his colleagues.

His dedication extended far beyond his duties, leaving a meaningful and lasting impact on those he worked alongside and the community he served.

After more than three decades of service, Mr. Lerma leaves behind a legacy defined by commitment, integrity, and pride in public service. While he begins a new chapter, his contributions to El Metro and the City of Laredo will not be forgotten.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Joe "Flash" Lerma for his years of dedicated service and to wish him continued success and fulfillment in his retirement.

RECOGNIZING CRISOSTO APACHE

**HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2026

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Professor Crisosto Apache of Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design for being named Colorado's Poet Laureate.

Crisosto is an accomplished multimedia artist, writer, poet, educator, and advocate for the Native American Indigenous LGBTQ/Two-spirit identity. Their recognition by the Governor of Colorado reflects Crisosto's extraordinary talent and distinguished achievements as a poet, as well as their enduring commitment to the arts, to education, and to literary expression across diverse communities. As Colorado's Poet Laureate, Crisosto will continue to amplify the voices and stories of all people who have called Colorado home, and spread the transformative and connective powers of poetry across public spaces.

Crisosto is originally from the Mescalero Apache Reservation in New Mexico and is Colorado's first Indigenous Poet Laureate.

They have published two poetry collections and received accolades, including the Betty Berzon Emerging Writers Award for their achievements in creative writing. As a long-time Lakewood resident and respected professor at the Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design, Crisosto exemplifies creative excellence and outstanding service to students.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Crisosto Apache for being named Colorado's Poet Laureate and thank them for their contribution and commitment to our community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2026

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, on April 22, 2026, I was recorded as NAY on Roll Call Vote No. 133. I intended to vote YEA on Roll Call No. 133.

RECOGNIZING RICK MCCOY UPON HIS RETIREMENT

**HON. ROBERT E. LATTA**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2026

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate a dedicated public servant, Rick McCoy, who will be retiring after thirty-five years of service as the Director of the Van Wert County Emergency Management Agency. Rick's commitment to public safety has helped the county's residents weather any emergency that has come their way.

Throughout his thirty-five years of service, Rick has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the safety and resilience of Van Wert County and its residents. He has led the agency through countless emergencies, natural disasters, and unforeseen crises, ensuring that communities received the swift and coordinated responses they needed in their most vulnerable moments. Under Rick's leadership, the agency grew into a model of preparedness and professionalism, forging strong partnerships with local, state, and federal partners to protect lives and property. His steady hand and tireless dedication have left Van Wert County a safer and better-prepared county.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Rick McCoy upon his retirement. On behalf of the people of the 5th Congressional District of Ohio, I recognize the dedication and leadership that Rick has shown through his decades of service to his community. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF GEORGE LIEU

**HON. DAVE MIN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2026

Mr. MIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of George Lieu, who passed away

peacefully on March 22, 2026, surrounded by his loving family. George was a resilient and spirited father, husband, and writer.

George Lieu was born in Chongqing, China, on May 22, 1944. Five years later, his family relocated to Taiwan, where he eventually received a law degree from Soochow University and served two years of military service.

In 1968, George married the love of his life, Kerry, and soon became a father to his eldest son, Ted. Shortly after, George immigrated to the United States and pursued a Master of Laws at Cleveland State University College of Law. With his heart set on bringing his wife and son to the United States, he stretched himself to build a life for his family. He took on numerous jobs while in school: dishwasher, cleaner for the school library, waiter, and day laborer. As hoped, Kerry and Ted immigrated to America in 1972, and the next year, George and Kerry's second son, John, was born. Together, George and Kerry began working weekends at flea markets, opened a small gift store, and eventually grew their efforts into a successful business spanning multiple states, building a life for their two children. They are the embodiment of the American Dream.

George's decades of determination and vision for his family eventually led him to fulfill his lifelong goal of becoming a writer. His two poetry books and his collection of short stories, "Dreams Entwined With Destiny," "Walking in the Rain," and "A Collection of Short Stories by George Lieu," were published in 2004, 2024, and 2026.

George will be remembered for his humor, liveliness, and his love for family. George is survived by his beloved wife Kerry, his two sons Representative TED LIEU and Dr. John Lieu, his daughter-in-law Betty Chim Lieu, and his grandsons Brennan and Austin.

RECOGNIZING THE BICENTENNIAL OF MULBERRY STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 27, 2026

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heart heavy, gratitude, and memory to pay tribute to Mulberry Street United Methodist Church on the occasion of its 200th anniversary. A bicentennial that reads like a hymn of endurance, an extended prayer answered by faithful hands across generations. A worship service to celebrate this remarkable milestone was held on Sunday, April 26, 2026, in Macon, Georgia.

Two centuries ago, in 1826, thirteen earnest Methodists met in a frontier courthouse on the west bank of the Ocmulgee River. They cleared forest and laid beams, and in 1828 built a simple house of worship where, the gospel's promise was first made visible in Macon. From that modest beginning grew a congregation that hosted the first meeting of the Georgia Conference, birthed Sunday Schools that became new churches, and reached into neighborhoods with a compassion that always began at the foot of the altar.

Mulberry's history is punctuated by triumph and trial. In seasons of growth, it raised white columns and expanded its sanctuary; in lean seasons it answered cries for help with Sunday School classrooms, youth centers, dining

halls, and ministries to the hungry. The Great Depression tested the congregation's resolve in ways that measured not balance sheets but character; families who had pledged generously found livelihoods gone, yet members scrimped and sacrificed until the building debt was paid. A devastating fire in April 1965 gutted the sanctuary, but stained-glass windows were preserved and later installed in the rebuilt sanctuary opened in 1968—glass that now shines as a symbol that beauty and faith can survive flame. More recently, during the global pandemic, Mulberry became a lifeline: volunteers fed neighbors when jobs vanished; pastors and members made calls, left meals on porches, and sustained the isolated with prayer and presence.

The Historical Room safeguards treasures—Thomas Darley's ordination certificate signed by Francis Asbury, night caps, a Darley Bible—but the true archive of Mulberry is the ledger of lives: the child fed, the student mentored, the widow comforted, the immigrant welcomed. The Youth Center that once teemed with young people, Macon Outreach's soup kitchen and pantry, global mission partnerships, and the many ministries that compose "The Mulberry Way" testify to a congregation that turns calamity into compassion.

We remember the silent sacrifices: the volunteers who mended roofs and hearts, the pastors who shepherded trembling souls, the families whose small gifts kept a mission alive. We honor the courage that rebuilt after storms, repurposed spaces for service, and answered every call with steadfast love.

Today Mulberry's ministries continue under the steady leadership of its pastor, the Reverend Jack Varnell, whose pastoral tenderness and clear vision guide the congregation into this new century of witness. We are also blessed that Bishop Robin Dease served as the guest preacher for this commemorative service—a fitting voice to celebrate a congregation whose reach has spanned local streets and global fields.

Mr. Speaker, in honoring Mulberry Street United Methodist Church on its bicentennial, we honor an ethic: that faith is not merely spoken but lived; that worship must be joined to works of mercy; that a community's true wealth is measured by how it treats its most vulnerable. For 200 years this congregation has lived that ethic faithfully—surviving the Great Depression, rebuilding after fire, weathering wars, and answering when a modern pandemic called forth every compassion.

I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with the more than 765,000 people of Georgia's 2nd Congressional District in congratulating Mulberry Street United Methodist Church on this bicentennial milestone. May Mulberry's lights continue to shine, its doors remain open, and its table welcome all who are weary. May God bless Mulberry Street Church, bless Pastor Jack Varnell, bless Bishop Robin Dease as she continues her work and may God bless the city of Macon, Georgia.

RECOGNIZING THE ARVADA CENTER FOR THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

### HON. BRITTANY PETERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 27, 2026*

Ms. PETERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities for its 50th anniversary.

Since opening in 1976, the Arvada Center has been an important cultural institution in Colorado, enriching our community through theatre, visual arts, arts education, and public programs that engage and inspire people of all ages.

For fifty years, the Arvada Center has brought artists, students, audiences, and families together—sparking creativity, nurturing learning, and building lasting connections. It has become a cornerstone of the cultural life of Arvada, Jefferson County, and the greater Denver metro area, offering high-quality artistic experiences while remaining committed to broad community access and participation. The Arvada Center's lasting success reflects the dedication of its staff, educators, performers, volunteers, and supporters, all of whom have helped build a vibrant and welcoming place for the arts to thrive. Its impact extends well beyond its campus, strengthening our region through artistic excellence, education, and civic engagement.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate the Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities on its 50th anniversary and thank them for their contribution to our community.

RECOGNIZING THE LEGACY AND LASTING IMPACT OF GEORGE OSTROM

### HON. RYAN K. ZINKE

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 27, 2026*

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 250th year since our Nation's founding by recognizing the legacy and lasting impact of George Ostrom, a legendary voice of Montana's Flathead Valley.

Mr. Ostrom's life was anything but ordinary, filled with adventures and excitement. As a young man, he worked with the United States Forest Service, served as a paratrooper during World War II, became one of the early smokejumpers protecting our Nation's wilderness, and regularly climbed mountains in his backyard, Glacier National Park. His passion for the outdoors and deep understanding of Montana would shape the rest of his life and career.

George Ostrom, who passed away on January 1, 2025, at the age of 96, was known to many as "the voice of the Flathead Valley." A natural-born storyteller, Mr. Ostrom, when not creating his own remarkable stories, shared community stories around the Flathead for more than six decades through radio and newspaper. Mr. Ostrom remained active in journalism into his late 90s, becoming a staple voice on the airwaves, eventually owning and operating KOFI radio and later contributing to

KGEZ. For many in the Flathead Valley, the day did not truly begin until they heard George Ostrom on the radio.

Beyond radio, Mr. Ostrom built the Kalispell Weekly News into one of the largest weekly newspapers in Montana and spent decades writing columns that captured the stories of the region. His work helped document the history of Montana and showcase our state's identity for future generations.

Mr. Ostrom's love for Montana extended beyond journalism; he played a role in conservation efforts, including contributing to the development of the Wilderness Act of 1964, and remained a passionate advocate for preserving the natural beauty of Montana.

George Ostrom's experiences and remarkable stories are all overshadowed by his biggest accomplishment: his family. He shared his love for adventure with his wife Iris and his four children.

Mr. Speaker, George Ostrom's life reflects the very best of Montana and the American spirit. He was a pioneer and a storyteller whose voice inspired people across our great state. His legacy is not only found in the stories he told, but in the stories he created. Reflecting on his remarkable life, we are reminded that individuals like George Ostrom help define the character of our Nation and his voice will continue to echo throughout Montana.

RECOGNIZING MINNIE MAE TALBOTT

### HON. MARK ALFORD

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 27, 2026*

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commemorate the extraordinary life and legacy of Minnie Mae Talbott, a remarkable Missourian whose story reflects courage, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to public service.

On May 10, 1919, Minnie Mae Talbott was sworn in as Sheriff of Lexington, Missouri, following the tragic murder of her husband, who was serving as acting Sheriff and was killed in the line of duty. In the face of unimaginable loss, she stepped forward to serve her community with strength and determination.

Her service stands as a powerful testament to civic courage. At a time when few women held positions of leadership, Minnie Mae Talbott broke barriers and set an example that continues to inspire generations. She upheld the rule of law during a difficult chapter in our Nation's history and demonstrated that true public service requires character, sacrifice, and a willingness to answer the call.

As communities gather this year to celebrate the inaugural Minnie Mae Day, her legacy is being honored through education, engagement, and a permanent place in history. Her story is one that deserves to be remembered not only in Missouri, but across the country.

It is my privilege to recognize Minnie Mae Talbott and her enduring contributions to our state and our Nation.