

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING JOSEPH RAY
WILLIAMS

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful Nation and the citizens of the 24th Congressional District of Texas. The 2025 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Aviation Structural Mechanic First Class Joseph Ray Williams, United States Navy, of Roanoke, Texas, for his honorable service in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Petty Officer First Class Williams served honorably in the United States Navy from 1996 to 2016, completing seven deployments and circumnavigating the globe three times in defense of the Nation. As a member of Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15, he played a vital role in support of the Kosovo Campaign, Operation Enduring Freedom, and the Global War on Terror. His military service was marked by courage, professionalism, and devotion to duty earning him six Good Conduct Medals, three Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, three Humanitarian Service Medals, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service Medals, and numerous unit and marksmanship awards recognizing his excellence and leadership across two decades of service.

Following his distinguished naval career, Petty Officer Williams continued his lifelong mission of service by founding Texas Veterans Outdoors (TVO) in 2017, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping veterans transition successfully into civilian life. What began as a small grassroots effort in Denton County has grown into a global network of more than 9,000 members, providing mentorship, coaching, and fellowship to veterans and their families. Through outdoor experiences such as hunting, fishing, hiking, and retreats, TVO offers therapeutic and empowering opportunities that help veterans reconnect with themselves, their families, and their communities.

Under Petty Officer Williams' leadership, Texas Veterans Outdoors has become a model of veteran-led outreach and healing, fostering resilience and camaraderie among service members across Texas and beyond. His work has strengthened families, inspired community partnerships, and created a legacy of compassion and leadership that continues to uplift those who have served.

Petty Officer Williams' steadfast dedication to his fellow veterans, his community, and his country reflects the highest traditions of the United States Navy and brings great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

HONORING AVERY GREEN

HON. CRAIG A. GOLDMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Avery Green in earning second place at the Health Occupation Students of America International Leadership Conference Competition. This accomplishment shows Ms. Green's dedication to her education and serving those within her community.

The Health Occupation Students of America organization encourages students to become leaders in one of the highest demand job markets in the Nation. The growing need for healthcare workers is becoming increasingly evident. Ms. Green's participation and excellence in the Clinical Nursing competition shows initiative and highlights a level of strength and compassion indicative of a true Texan spirit. As the first from Aledo High School to win the State HOSA competition and go on to compete at the International Leadership Conference, she is an inspiration to many within the district who will seek to follow in her footsteps.

On behalf of the 12th Congressional District of Texas, I am proud to offer my congratulations to Ms. Avery Green and wish her much luck and success in her years to come.

TRIBUTE TO JUSTIN MATURO

HON. DEREK TRAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Mr. TRAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Justin Maturo, a member of my congressional staff who will soon be departing Capitol Hill after a combined fifteen years of public service. From intern to Deputy Chief of Staff, Justin has held several important roles in three congressional offices where he has directly contributed to the betterment of communities in the states of Texas and California.

Born in Westchester, New York, and raised in Tappan, New York, to an Italian father and Hawaiian mother, Justin first came to Washington, D.C. as a wide-eyed college student at American University with a mountain of motivation and aspirations to shape policy.

As an intern for the U.S. House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, he showed promise by swiftly screening requests and manning the phones. He then served as a Staff Assistant to the late Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson from Texas, where he quickly rose in the ranks to serve as her Senior Legislative Assistant and covered a robust portfolio of legislative issues such as defense, labor, housing, campaign finance reform, and more. After a brief stint in the private sector, Justin was called back to public service where

he served as Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director to Congressman MARK TAKANO from California. After several years on the Hill, Justin earned a prestigious appointment at the Department of Defense where he served as Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs to coordinate legislative affairs across all military departments and components in service to our great Nation.

I was fortunate Justin agreed to come back to Capitol Hill to join my office as Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director. In the short time he has been with my team, he has worked with me to protect veteran jobs, secure additional resources for military assets in my district, call for the release of Vietnamese prisoners of conscience, and so much more. He has always taken every challenge in stride—appreciating and knowing fully well the great responsibility we have to our constituents as public servants. His colleagues—both current and former—describe him as a trusted mentor. What sets Justin apart is his superpower ability to stay above the fray and to keep his eye on the prize. Despite always operating with a full load of projects on any given day, Justin always makes time to give advice and mentor younger staff with sincerity and genuine compassion.

I cannot thank Justin enough for having acted as a trusted advisor and guiding me through my first year in Congress. Together, we set a foundation that will have resounding impacts in my district for years to come.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that Justin's jovial spirit and words of wisdom will be sorely missed by all those who were lucky to work with him. Alas, all good things must come to an end. I wish him, his wonderful partner Jackie, and their dog Truman all the best in this next chapter of their lives. I know Justin will continue to make a positive impact in his next quest and I honor his great contributions to the people of California's 45th Congressional District.

RECOGNIZING ERIC LEE NEWTON

HON. BETH VAN DUYNÉ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYNÉ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful Nation and the citizens of the 24th Congressional District of Texas. The 2025 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Sergeant Eric Lee Newton, United States Army, of Colleyville, Texas, for his honorable service in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Sergeant Newton served honorably in the United States Army from 1968 to 1971 as a tank commander with K Troop, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, under the command of Colonel George Patton. While deployed to Vietnam from July 1968 to July 1969, he displayed extraordinary courage and devotion to

• 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.

his fellow soldiers. During a mortar attack on his unit, Sergeant Newton was wounded by shrapnel while shielding his comrades and rescuing the company mascot, sustaining injuries that earned him the Purple Heart. His exemplary service also earned him the Army Commendation Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, and recognition for marksmanship on both the M-14 and M-16 rifles. His unit additionally received the Valorous Unit Award and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm for collective heroism in combat.

Following his military service, Sergeant Newton has remained a lifelong advocate for veterans and a pillar of his community. He has served as Senior Vice Commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 1513 in the Mid-Cities and as Junior Vice Commander for the Department of Texas, championing programs that support wounded veterans and their families. For more than thirty years, he has also served as the National Public Affairs Officer for the 11th Armored Cavalry Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia, preserving the legacy of those who served and ensuring their sacrifices are remembered.

Beyond his dedication to veterans, Sergeant Newton has spent decades volunteering across Colleyville as a coach, civic volunteer, and youth mentor. He served on the design committee for Colleyville Heroes Park, volunteered with Kidsville Park, and coached youth baseball and soccer. In 2005, he returned to Iraq to document the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's combat history, continuing his lifelong commitment to telling the story of American service and sacrifice.

Sergeant Newton's courage in battle, enduring service to veterans, and steadfast commitment to his community reflect the highest traditions of the United States Army and bring great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

HAITI ECONOMIC LIFT PROGRAM EXTENSION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. GREGORY F. MURPHY

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 12, 2026

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of my bill H.R. 6504, the HELP Extension Act. My legislation provides a three-year extension of the HOPE/HELP programs. These are trade preference programs which in the past has helped deliver meaningful economic opportunities to thousands of people in Haiti who desperately need stability, hope, and a path forward.

I first traveled to Haiti doing medical mission work following the devastating earthquake in 2010, and I have returned many times since. Through those visits, I have come to know the people of Haiti well. They are good, hard-working people who are resilient and strive for stability and dignity in the midst of chaos and profound suffering caused by political unrest.

Today, Haiti is facing an unprecedented convergence of crises. Rampant gang violence, political uncertainty, and the near-total collapse of basic institutions have devastated daily life and pushed an already fragile nation

to the brink of disaster. In this environment, economic stability is not a luxury. It is a necessity to give the people an opportunity to have some semblance of a normal life. Jobs mean food on the table, children in school, and communities that are less vulnerable to criminal influence, corruption and violence.

The HOPE/HELP programs remain among the few functioning lifelines that provide lawful employment and economic stability in Haiti, and it is imperative that the U.S. play a role in these endeavors. Extending these programs will not by any means solve all of Haiti's challenges, but it will preserve jobs, provide employers with certainty, and allow them to continue employing hardworking Haitians during an extraordinarily difficult time. Stability in Haiti matters deeply to the United States. Haiti is in our own backyard. What happens there affects the broader stability of our hemisphere. When nations in our hemisphere collapse, the consequences inevitably reach our shores. Malign influences such as Islamic radicals or dictatorial regimes such as Russia and China see an avenue to gain a foothold against the U.S. in our region.

Ensuring stability, opportunity, and lawful economic activity in Haiti as a defensive measure, if for not other reasons, is squarely in the national security interest of the United States. If these jobs were to disappear, it would fuel further instability and risk creating a vacuum that could be filled by gangs, transnational criminal organizations, or these hostile foreign actors. Without legitimate employment opportunities, many Haitians are left with impossible choices. Either submit to criminal networks, migrate to another country, or starve. So please understand that the HOPE/HELP program is a win-win for all parties involved. It is good for Haiti, good for America, and good for the security of the Western Hemisphere.

I would also like to mention a dear friend of mine, Father Rick Frechette, a Catholic priest from Connecticut who has served the poorest of the poor in Haiti for more than 40 years. He has regularly tended to their spiritual and medical needs. Yet at the same time, he has, at his own personal peril, rescued hundreds of kidnapped individuals held ransom by these murderous bandits that control much of Port au Prince. I converse with him regularly, and he provides firsthand insight into the worsening conditions on the ground. The picture he describes is heart breaking and appalling. Several hospital guards have been killed, many hospitals workers forced to leave the country, and the threat of criminal gangs continues to be an ever-present danger. These are the real human consequences of instability.

We have a moral and national responsibility to act where we can and to support policies that prevent further collapse. I urge all of my colleagues to support this critical life and nation saving legislation.

HONORING THE STANDARD MEAT COMPANY ON THEIR 90TH ANNI- VERSARY

HON. CRAIG A. GOLDMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Standard Meat Company in

Fort Worth, Texas. For 90 years, the Standard Meat Company has been providing quality meat to Texans and the rest of the world.

After its founding in 1935, the Standard Meat Company built a reputation of high quality meat products. Quickly they were able to expand from local business to a coast to coast clientele and eventually to a global market. From innovations in packaging to protect the freshness and shelf life of their product to cutting edge production and sustainability technology, Standard Meat Company has remained at the top of the industry for nearly a century. Now, in its fourth generation of family ownership, the Rosenthal family continues to prioritize innovation and evolution within the company, honoring the Texan spirit of resilience and hard work.

On behalf of the 12th Congressional District of Texas, I am proud to offer my congratulations to Standard Meat Company on their 90th Anniversary and I am eager to see their continued growth into the future.

RECOGNIZING JAMES PALMERSHEIM

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a grateful nation and the citizens of the 24th Congressional District of Texas. The 2025 Congressional Veteran Commendation is hereby presented to Captain James Palmersheim, United States Army, of Colleyville, Texas, for his honorable service in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Captain Palmersheim was commissioned as an officer in the United States Army in 1984 as a Distinguished Military Graduate from Marquette University's ROTC program. He served on active duty as an Army aviator and intelligence officer, flying both fixed and rotary wing aircraft, including the OV-10 Mohawk and RU-21H. During his service with the 224th Military Intelligence Battalion, he demonstrated exceptional skill and leadership earning the Air Assault Badge, Senior Aviator Badge, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, and National Defense Service Ribbon.

Following his military career, Captain Palmersheim has continued to exemplify selfless service through a lifetime of work supporting veterans, military families, and youth across the Nation. In 2003, he led a national effort to restore and fly a Huey helicopter across the country culminating in its historic landing on the National Mall, where it now stands as a centerpiece of the Smithsonian's Price of Freedom exhibit. As founder and longtime director of American Airlines' Veterans and Military Initiatives program, he helped develop groundbreaking partnerships that provided resources, recognition, and support for wounded warriors, Gold Star families, and military personnel worldwide.

Captain Palmersheim has also served on the boards of numerous nonprofit organizations, including the Air Power Foundation, the Gary Sinise Foundation, and Snowball Express, which honors children of fallen service