

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

members. He co-founded Independence Corps Foundation, which has donated millions of dollars in mobility equipment to veterans and first responders with disabilities. He currently sits on the board of the Tribute to Valor Foundation, an organization he helped establish to inspire students nationwide through the core values of the Medal of Honor and STEM education. His service has earned him multiple prestigious honors, including the Medal of Honor Society Patriot Award, the Order of Saint Michael from the Army Aviation Association of America, and honorary recognition from the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment and the 457th Fighter Squadron.

Captain Palmersheim's unwavering dedication to veterans, their families, and the next generation reflects the highest traditions of the United States Army and brings great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT
OF LOS FRESNOS CHIEF OF POLICE,
HECTOR GONZALEZ

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the City of Los Fresnos Chief of Police, Hector Gonzalez, whose retirement marks the conclusion of forty-five years of outstanding service in law enforcement.

Chief Gonzalez's leadership has kept our community safe, enabled our continued growth, and made the Rio Grande Valley a desirable place to live.

As a mentor to countless men and women in uniform, he instilled core values of accountability, transparency, and respect, which will leave a lasting and positive impact on the Los Fresnos Police Department.

Chief Gonzalez served Los Fresnos with honor, integrity and courage, while maintaining a steadfast commitment to the safety and well-being of everyone in our community.

I am honored to represent some of the best of South Texas, including those who put their lives on the line each day to keep our communities safe. Under Chief Gonzalez's leadership, Los Fresnos Police has gone above and beyond, fostering trust between law enforcement and the community they serve.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a grateful South Texas, I thank Chief Hector Gonzalez for his service to the people of Los Fresnos and congratulate him on his much-deserved retirement.

HONORING THE LIFE OF EDWARD
"EDDIE" COLE

HON. MAXWELL FROST

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Edward "Eddie" Cole, a devoted public servant, community advocate, and beloved leader who passed away on Saturday, December 20, 2025, at the age of 67.

Eddie Cole proudly served as Mayor of Florida's oldest Black incorporated municipality, the Historic Town of Eatonville from 2016 to 2022.

A tireless champion for preserving Eatonville's history, including the legacy of the Hungerford School, Mayor Cole led with passion, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to his community.

Beyond public service, he spent more than 30 years as an assistant coach for the Rollins College women's basketball team, earning induction into the Rollins Sports Hall of Fame in 2023. He also served as chaplain for the Orlando Magic, offering guidance and faith to players and staff.

Perhaps his greatest pride was his two decades as executive director of Every Kid Outreach Inc., where he transformed countless young lives through mentorship, encouragement, and opportunity.

While his accomplishments were many, Eddie Cole's greatest impact was the love he poured into people.

Mayor Cole led with love, compassion, and a deep commitment to uplifting others, serving his community for decades as a public servant, coach, and trusted leader.

Sending much love and prayers to his family, loved ones, and all who were blessed to know him. His legacy of service will live on forever.

RECOGNIZING KEVIN POTTINGER

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 Major General Kevin Pottinger, United States Air Force, of Keller, Texas, for his honorable service in the Armed Forces of the United States of America and for his continued service to his community.

Major General Pottinger served with distinction in the United States Air Force for nearly four decades, from 1976 to 2015. A command pilot with more than 3,500 flight hours in the F-16 Fighting Falcon, he held leadership positions at every level, culminating in his role as Commander of the 301st Fighter Wing and later as Mobilization Assistant to the Commander, Pacific Air Forces, at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. Following his initial retirement, he selflessly returned to active duty after the September 11th terrorist attacks to fly combat missions in the War on Terror, exemplifying the Air Force core values of integrity, service, and excellence. His military decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, Meritorious Service Medal with silver oak leaf cluster, Air Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Air Force Achievement Medal, and numerous campaign and service awards recognizing his combat readiness and humanitarian contributions.

Following his military career, Major General Pottinger has continued to serve his state and Nation through leadership, mentorship, and

advocacy for veterans. Appointed by Texas Governor Greg Abbott as Presiding Officer of the Texas Military Preparedness Commission, he works to strengthen Texas' military installations and ensure their continued role in national defense. As President of the Freedom Mobility Foundation, he leads efforts to provide adaptive vehicles and mobility equipment to severely injured veterans empowering them to regain independence and quality of life.

Major General Pottinger's exceptional record of military leadership, combined with his unwavering commitment to veterans and the community, reflects the highest traditions of the United States Air Force and brings great credit upon himself, the State of Texas, and the United States of America.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 18; NAY on Roll Call No. 19; YEA on Roll Call No. 20; YEA on Roll Call No. 21; YEA on Roll Call No. 22; and NAY on Roll Call No. 23.

HONORING ABRAHAM ALEXANDER

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 honor Mr. Abraham Alexander for receiving the Stephen Bruton Award.

Mr. Alexander grew up and began his career in Fort Worth. In remarkable fashion, his music career has soared, earning him national recognition and numerous accolades. The Stephen Bruton Award recognizes Mr. Alexander for his contribution to the film industry through his song "Like a Bird" in the film Sing Sing. As filmmaker and fellow Fort Worth native Taylor Sheridan described, Mr. Alexander is a "dreamer who is living that dream."

For eighteen years, the Lone Star Film Festival has brought together filmmakers, producers, and musicians from across the media and entertainment industry for its prestigious award show. With the reception of the Stephen Bruton Award, Mr. Alexander joins the ranks of celebrated musicians such as Willie Nelson, Clint Black, and Pat Green.

On behalf of Texas' 12th Congressional District, I am honored to recognize Mr. Alexander's outstanding achievement in music. His success is an inspiration to the City of Fort Worth and our community. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Alexander and look forward to seeing what he creates next.

RECOGNIZING JAMES LEONARD
WILLIAMS

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