

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING OSCAR ROBLES

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Oscar Robles for his contributions to the Community Health Initiative and to our community.

For the last nine years, Oscar has served on the Community Health Initiative (CHI) board. He had dedicated his time and efforts to CHI as part of an extraordinary team that breaks down barriers, making sure our most vulnerable neighbors, from children and families to older adults, have access to health coverage, and to the care that they need to live a healthy life.

Oscar has played an important role in keeping our community healthy by providing financial guidance and business advice that has enabled CHI to assist more than 27,000 people across Napa and Solano counties to access affordable health coverage through Medi-Cal, Medicare, and Covered California. Oscar serves as the Senior Financial Advisor and Resident Director of Merrill Lynch Wealth Management.

Born in Juarez, Mexico, Oscar moved to Hollister, California with his mother when he was a child. When his dad joined them, he opened a truck repair shop where Oscar learned the value of building financial skills as he worked alongside his dad. Later, Oscar was the first in his family to attend college and graduated from San Francisco State University with bachelor's degrees in cinema and anthropology.

His passion for finance was ignited by one of his first managers after college. Oscar used his knowledge and experience to teach our community members about financial literacy, helping individuals who may not have had other resources learn how to understand taxes, grow a business, or create a financial safety net.

Oscar also has a place in his heart for serving others as demonstrated through his volunteer efforts. This includes having served on the board of the Hispanic/Latino Organization for Leadership and Advancement, the oldest and largest Bank of America Employee Network, welcoming incoming Latino transfer students at Santa Clara State University, and his service with the Hispanic Bar Association, and the Sonoma Valley Vintners and Growers Association. As a board member and past president of CHI, Oscar has been instrumental in guiding the organization in its growth and financial stability.

Mr. Speaker, Oscar Robles has done incredible work for the Community Health Initiative and for our community. It is with great honor and deep appreciation that we recognize his invaluable contributions here today.

HONORING ELIZA ALDRIDGE

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Eliza Aldridge, a senior at Leeland Public School, for being named the 2026 Michigan Poetry Out Loud State Champion. This outstanding achievement reflects not only Eliza's dedication and talent, but also the strength of educational opportunities available to students across Northern Michigan.

Poetry Out Loud is a nationally recognized program that encourages students from across the country to engage with poetry through memorization and performance. The competition begins at the local level in classrooms and communities, with winners advancing to state and ultimately national competition. Now in its 21st year, over 3,000 students and 77 teachers participated across Michigan.

Eliza distinguished herself from more than 16 finalists from across the state during the competition at Central Michigan University. She displayed exceptional poise, depth of knowledge, and appreciation for the richness of literature through her impressive recitations of "Chicago" by Carl Sandburg, "Introduction" by Alice Duer Miller, and "A Lady" by Amy Lowell. Her success is also a testament to the important role educators and mentors play in shaping the next generation. I further recognize the efforts of Michigan Humanities, the Michigan Arts and Culture Council, and all partners who make programs like Poetry Out Loud possible.

Mr. Speaker, let us all join in recognizing Eliza Aldridge for being named the 2026 Michigan Poetry Out Loud State Champion. I am confident she will continue to exemplify hard work, determination, and excellence which define our Northern Michigan communities, and I wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

HONORING MORGAN G. HOBEN

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable servant, Mrs. Morgan Hoben.

Mrs. Morgan Hoben, a native of Natchez, Mississippi, is a graduate of Natchez-Adams High School, Class of 2002.

With nearly a decade of service in the Natchez-High School District and two years in the classroom, she brings both experience and passion to her role as a high school teacher of Journalism, Oral Communication, and Debate. Mrs. Hoben's educational journey reflects her deep commitment to learning and growth. She is a graduate of Copiah-Lincoln

Community College (Natchez Campus), The University, where she earned advanced credentials in education.

Her diverse academic background informs her dynamic teaching style and her ability to connect with students across disciplines. In the classroom, Mrs. Hoben is known for creating engaging, real-world learning experiences that empower students to find their voice, think critically, and communicate with confidence. She is especially passionate about developing student leaders through journalism and debate, while also serving as a strong advocate for the arts and creative expression.

Beyond the classroom, Mrs. Hoben has a long-standing history of service to others and is an active member of several professional and community organizations. Her work reflects a deep belief in the power of education to transform lives and strengthen communities. Mrs. Hoben is married to Jason Hoben, and together they are the proud parents of two sons, Jack and Michael.

She remains committed to uplifting her students, her school, and her hometown of Natchez through education, service, and advocacy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Morgan Hoben for her actions and achievements in the Natchez, Mississippi community.

HONORING THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE OF GEETA SIKAND

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor renowned nutrition expert Geeta Sikand for her enduring professional commitment to improve public health in our Nation through an emphasis on nutrition as a preventative measure to combat rising chronic illnesses.

An Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine in the Division of Cardiology at the University of California, Irvine, Geeta is a leading voice in advancing clinical nutrition strategies to prevent and manage dyslipidemia and cardiometabolic diseases, particularly in high-risk populations.

Geeta's work has been widely recognized for demonstrating the economic and clinical value of medical nutrition therapy in patient care. She is currently involved in advocacy efforts supporting the Expanded Medical Nutrition Therapy Act, legislation that seeks to expand Medicare coverage for nutrition therapy. Beyond research and policy work, Geeta has focused on educating health care providers and the public about how nutrition counseling can improve health outcomes.

Recently, Geeta was named one of the Nation's leading dietitians by the magazine Today's Dietician. The honor highlights professionals who are shaping the future of nutrition

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

science and patient care through research, advocacy, and clinical practice.

On behalf of constituents throughout Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I wish to thank Geeta Sikand and medical professionals like her who strive to reshape how we approach and view personal health care in America through our food consumption. I also applaud Geeta for her inspiring and enthusiastic approach to this very important issue.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JOSÉ RAFAEL "PICULÍN" ORTIZ RIJOS

HON. PABLO JOSÉ HERNÁNDEZ

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. HERNÁNDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of José Rafael "Piculín" Ortiz Rijos, affectionately known throughout Puerto Rico as "Piculín" and "El Concord," one of the most beloved and accomplished athletes in our history.

Born in Aibonito and raised in Cayey, José Rafael "Piculín" Ortiz Rijos became one of the greatest centers Puerto Rico has ever produced. His journey took him from the Baloncesto Superior Nacional, where he became a champion and icon, to Oregon State University, the National Basketball Association, Europe's elite leagues, and the international stage.

As a member of Puerto Rico's National Team, Piculín helped carry our flag with dignity across four Olympic Games and multiple international competitions. His performances helped cement Puerto Rico's place in international basketball and inspired countless young Puerto Ricans to believe that greatness could emerge from our small Island.

Among his greatest moments was Puerto Rico's historic 92-73 victory over the United States at the 2004 Summer Olympics, a game forever etched in the memory of our people. That day, Puerto Rico did not simply win a basketball game. Puerto Rico reminded the world of its talent, courage, and competitive spirit.

For generations of Puerto Ricans, Piculín was more than a basketball player. He was the sound of a packed coliseum, the voice of a radio announcer on a summer night, and the pride of families crowded around a television to watch Puerto Rico compete against the world. He was the backdrop to evenings on neighborhood courts where children attempted to imitate his signature moves, and the reason communities gathered, transcended their differences, and found in basketball a language all their own. In him, Puerto Rico saw height, talent, discipline, and heart, but above all, we saw ourselves.

May the legacy of José Rafael "Piculín" Ortiz Rijos, our "Piculín," our "El Concord," live forever in the hearts of a grateful Puerto Rico.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF
CHRISTOPHER BLASNEK

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the dedicated service of Christopher Blasnek with over 40 years of law enforcement experience. He will be retiring as a Senior Safety Officer with the Rancho Santiago Community College District. He began with RSCCD around March 2022, and has overseen the safety of employees, students and my Congressional District Office.

Prior to the Rancho Santiago Community College District, Christopher served as Commander to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department South Patrol Division, comprising the Carson, Cerritos, Lakewood, Lomita, Norwalk, and Pico Rivera patrol stations beginning in 2019.

Christopher Blasnek was the Unit Commander of East Patrol Division, Crescenta Valley Sheriff's Station. Prior to Crescenta Valley Station, Captain Blasnek was assigned to the Reserve Deputy Program as the operations lieutenant/unit commander. This assignment placed him at the helm for the Department's Reserve Deputy Program, Explorer Program, and Posse Program located in Monterey Park. Also, he worked in the East Patrol Division, working as the operations lieutenant of Walnut/Diamond Bar Station. This position placed him as the second in command of a large area, which included Diamond Bar, Walnut, Rowland Heights, and Covina Hills.

In 1991, Captain Blasnek was instrumental in the formation of the Department's first full-time Motor Program. He participated in the pilot program under the training of the California Highway Patrol. Today, the Department has motor vehicles in many contract cities and contract transportation bureaus.

Christopher Blasnek earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from California State University-Long Beach, where he also went on to obtain his Master of Science in Emergency Services Administration in 2008.

Christopher was the 2015 President of the San Gabriel Valley Peace Officers Association, a charity organization designed to network with other agencies throughout the San Gabriel Valley to share crime and intelligence information.

Christopher was promoted by Sheriff Jim McDonnell on March 16, 2017, and took over the position of unit commander at the Crescenta Valley Station on April 2, 2017.

Christopher Blasnek resides in Dana Point with his wife of 40 years. He enjoys golf, traveling, and spending time with his family.

COMMEMORATING THE NEW JERSEY TAIWANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. KEAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the New Jersey Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce, which has supported Tai-

wanese American entrepreneurs and professionals throughout New Jersey. As a member of the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce of North America, the New Jersey Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce remains steadfast in their commitment to serving Taiwanese professionals across the Garden State by promoting networking, resource sharing, and community engagement opportunities.

I extend my warm congratulations to the New Jersey Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce as they celebrate their Annual Gala and President Handover Ceremony. This esteemed non-profit organization has made significant strides in promoting trade and commerce throughout New Jersey by strengthening economic ties between the United States and Taiwan. Moreover, the New Jersey Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce commitment to community service is evident through their active participation in local cultural events and their ongoing support for education.

The New Jersey Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce is well known for their charitable contributions, annual conventions, and community festivals at Bridgewater Commons in Bridgewater, Somerset County. In addition, the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce of North America engages the next generation of business leaders through youth empowerment activities within their Junior Chapter, placing a strong emphasis on mentorship and career development.

This organization provides its members with valuable opportunities to exchange business insights, technology updates, and management experiences. Through a variety of initiatives, including large-scale gatherings for entrepreneurs throughout the Greater New York-New Jersey area, the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce of North America fosters connections and celebrates the many accomplishments of the community.

The New Jersey Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to serving Taiwanese Americans here in New Jersey. I am confident that their impact and involvement will continue to strengthen the community for years to come.

RECOGNIZING THE WEEK OF JUNE 7 TO 13, 2026, AS NATIONAL ROOFING WEEK

HON. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the National Roofing Contractors Association headquartered in Itasca, Illinois, and its efforts to designate the week of June 7 to 13, 2026, as National Roofing Week.

The roof is one of the most important components of any home or business. It is the first line of defense against natural elements, such as rain, snow or wind, and yet it is often taken for granted until it falls into disrepair. National Roofing Week honors the thousands of roofing-related businesses and workers across the country, as well as the industry's commitment to public service. National Roofing Week is a valuable reminder of the significance quality roofing has on every home and business in the U.S.