

HONORING THE LIFE OF PORTER
G. PEEPLES

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of one of Lexington, Kentucky's most influential citizens, Porter G. Peeples. Better known as P.G., he was the longtime leader of the Urban League of Lexington-Fayette County. He passed away while working in his office on April 28, 2026. Peeples is survived by his wife, Wilma, a son and daughter, and two grandchildren.

Peeples was born in Lynch, Kentucky on October 26, 1945, where his father was a coal miner. He attended the Lynch Public Colored School until desegregation happened his senior year in high school. During his life he kept close ties with other African Americans with roots in Eastern Kentucky coal towns. The first in his family to go to college, Peeples attended South East Community College and transferred to the University of Kentucky during his junior year, where he was one of around 50 black undergraduates. He was a volunteer with the newly formed Urban League. Soon after his graduation in 1968, he took a job at the Urban League as Education Director. In 1972 he was named Executive Director and worked there until his death.

The Urban League focused on workforce training, minority business support, and mentoring programs for young people. Through Peeples' efforts, they began to also work on affordable housing issues. Today the Urban League has more than 100 rentals and is a part of a partnership developing 12.5 acres dedicated to affordable housing. He worked with the Kentucky Housing Corporation to secure low-interest loans for buyers and was appointed to its board in the 1980s. He was serving on that board at the time of his death.

Peeples was also a champion for civil rights. He was well-respected by the business community, government leaders, and non-profit agencies. Peeples excelled at developing and nurturing relationships with people throughout the Lexington community. I appreciated his leadership, his love for our community, and our conversations about how to improve opportunities for the citizens of Lexington.

P.G. Peeples was a respected leader whose many accomplishments leave a lasting legacy on Lexington and the many individuals whose lives were influenced by his persistence, his passion, and his selfless, humble nature. It is my honor to lift up his life before the U.S. House of Representatives.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
MS. JANE GARCÍA, CEO OF LA
CLÍNICA DE LA RAZA, INC.

HON. LATEEFAH SIMON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Ms. SIMON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the retirement of a towering figure in the Bay Area, the Chief Executive Officer of La Clínica de La Raza, Inc., Ms. Jane García.

Ms. García was born in El Paso, Texas in 1953. Like far too many Americans, Ms.

García grew up uninsured, only visiting doctors in times of great desperation and sickness. Ms. García's challenging experience inspired her to pursue an education in public health.

In 1975, Ms. García moved to the East Bay. In 1977, she began her Master of Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley. During her studies, Ms. García interned for a local healthcare clinic based in East Oakland. Called La Clínica de La Raza, the clinic offered comprehensive free medical services to a largely Latino population that was underserved by the healthcare system.

In 1982, Ms. García would rise to the role of CEO of La Clínica, which was then a small, community-based project with a \$2 million budget. During her nearly 45-year tenure, La Clínica grew into an expansive community healthcare system with an annual budget exceeding \$175 million, a designation as a Federally Qualified Health Center, and a staff of more than 1,200 committed caregivers. La Clínica expanded its care options to include a range of culturally appropriate and accessible primary and preventative care services. La Clínica now serves over 82,000 patients a year across 35 sites in Alameda, Contra Costa, and Solano Counties. More than 386,000 annual patient visits are made to La Clínica sites around the Bay Area. Ms. García's leadership has ensured that care is not only accessible, but culturally relevant and meets patients where they are, with dignity and respect.

In addition to her work with La Clínica, Ms. García has been widely recognized as an authority on issues of health and health equity. Ms. García's fierce advocacy was instrumental in ensuring continued state funding for prenatal care for immigrant women. Ms. García is a founding member and served as Chair of the California Primary Care Association, representing community health centers across the state of California. She has also served as Chair of the California Endowment, Alameda Alliance for Health, Community Health Center Network, Community Clinic Consortium, and continues to serve on the Board of Directors of the California Primary Care Association and Aliados Health. Ms. García has received an array of honors for her decades-long commitment to community health and service. She has been awarded the Common Cause Award for Public Service Achievement, the National Association of Community Health Centers' Betsey K. Cooke Advocacy MVP Award, induction into both the Alameda and Contra Costa County Women's Hall of Fame, recognition as a Most Admired CEO and one of the Most Influential Women in Business by the San Francisco Business Times, designation as UC Berkeley School of Public Health Alumna of the Year in 2019 and one of the school's 75 Most Influential Alumni, and received the 2025 Samuel Merritt University Health Impact Award. In 2025, Ms. García was selected by Assemblymember Buffy Wicks as Woman of the Year for California Assembly District 15. In 2026, she was selected by Assemblymember Mia Bonta as Woman of the Year for California Assembly District 18.

Throughout her many decades of work in the Bay Area, Ms. García has proven time and time again to be a committed and indefatigable leader and advocate in the field of community healthcare. Her visionary leadership has resulted in transformational change for

thousands of California's most vulnerable and underserved residents. I sincerely thank Ms. García for her tireless work and wish her the very best in her retirement.

HONORING ALICIA MARDINI

HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mrs. TORRES of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Alicia Mardini as she retires from her role as the CEO of East Valley Community Health Center (EVCHC).

Ms. Mardini has served EVCHC for 47 years, including 45 years where she has led the organization as CEO. Throughout her service, she has inspired EVCHC's leadership, vision, and organization, transforming the organization from a free clinic into a Federally Qualified Health Center.

Ms. Alicia Mardini earned her Master of Business Administration from University of Southern California in 1984, building a crucial foundation for serving tens of thousands of patients. Under her leadership, EVCHC has grown to serve more than 31,000 patients each year at locations throughout Pomona and the San Gabriel Valley.

Hailing from Peru, Alicia is fluent in both English and Spanish, allowing her to integrate two different cultural perspectives to her leadership. Under Ms. Mardini's direction, EVCHC serves diverse populations in the East San Gabriel Valley and Pomona communities. It assists individuals and families in need of various healthcare services from wellness check-ups to dental care, to counseling, to chronic illness treatment.

Beyond her leadership at EVCHC, Ms. Mardini sits on numerous community and agency advisory boards and committees, including county and state trade associations that represent community health centers.

Her advocacy includes serving as the Chairperson of the Board of Directors for the Los Angeles County Community Clinic Association (CCALAC) throughout 2012 and 2013. As recently as 2024 and 2025, she also served as the Chair of the Board of Directors of Health Care Los Angeles, Independent Practice Association, which is the largest Medi-Cal Independent Practice Association in California.

Ms. Mardini's work has left my hometown, Pomona, and the San Gabriel Valley, much better and healthier places. For her inspiring commitment to equitable health care and her remarkable leadership as the CEO of East Valley Community Health Center, it is my honor to recognize Ms. Alicia Mardini ahead of her retirement.

RECOGNIZING CHEMUNG COUNTY
SHERIFF'S INVESTIGATOR MI-
CHAEL THEETGE

HON. NICHOLAS A. LANGWORTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the profound bravery of

Chemung County Sheriff's Investigator Michael Theetge. On March 29, 2024, while protecting his community during a retail theft operation, Investigator Theetge was critically injured in the line of duty. His life was changed in an instant, yet his commitment to the citizens he serves has never wavered.

The recovery process for Investigator Theetge has been a testament to his incredible strength of character. Despite sustaining a traumatic brain injury, he has remained focused on ways to continue to serve his community. His perseverance in the face of adversity serves as an inspiration to his colleagues in law enforcement.

Beyond his primary duties, Investigator Theetge is an advocate for the first responder community. He has spearheaded initiatives to bolster specialized recovery resources throughout New York, turning his personal experiences into a catalyst for systemic improvement. His drive to effect positive change remains the cornerstone of his career.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the United States House of Representatives join me in honoring Investigator Michael Theetge for his service and sacrifice. We offer our full support as he continues his recovery. Our community is safer and stronger because of dedicated individuals like him.

CELEBRATING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF MORRISANIA

HON. RITCHIE TORRES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. TORRES of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a remarkable milestone: the 70th Anniversary of the Community Church of Morrisania in the Bronx.

Founded in 1956 by the Reverend William E. Thompson, the Community Church of Morrisania became the first African American church in the neighborhood and has stood for generations as a beacon of faith, hope, and service. Reverend Thompson's legacy is forever etched into the Bronx, with Teller Avenue between East 169th and East 170th Streets proudly renamed Rev. Wm. E. Thompson Way in his honor.

For seventy years, this non-denominational congregation has done far more than open its doors on Sundays. It has uplifted families, empowered young people, comforted seniors, and strengthened the fabric of Morrisania through unwavering service to the community.

In 2000, Reverend Thompson entrusted Pastor Starling Churn with carrying forward this sacred mission. Under Pastor Churn's leadership, the church has continued to be a pillar of compassion, unity, and spiritual guidance for the Bronx.

Today, we honor not only a church, but a living institution whose impact reaches far beyond its walls. I congratulate the Community Church of Morrisania on seventy extraordinary years of ministry and community leadership.

May God continue to bless the Community Church of Morrisania and the people it serves.

HONORING THE LIFE OF
CORPORAL BLAKE REYNOLDS

HON. VICTORIA SPARTZ

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mrs. SPARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Corporal Blake Reynolds, a devoted law enforcement officer of the Delaware County Sheriff's Office who lost his life in the line of duty on November 12, 2025. Blake's life was marked by faith, joy, and a deep love for the ordinary moments that quietly shape a meaningful life. He met his wife, Alison, online in their late twenties, though they later realized their paths had likely crossed many times before, including swim lessons as children. With more near misses than they could count, they came to see their story as one written by God's perfect timing, bringing them together when both were ready to build a life rooted in faith, laughter, and purpose.

Blake carried a playful spirit that made him instantly recognizable to those who knew him. He loved stories where good stands firm against evil, especially Batman and Star Wars—a love he lived out fully, whether by dressing as Batman for a child's birthday party or proudly hanging wife-approved Star Wars artwork in their home. He was goofy and ornery in equal measure, quick to laugh at the world around him, but most often at himself. His humor was never careless; it was generous, grounding, and deeply human.

Outside of his service, Blake found joy in simple, shared pleasures: loud '80s rock music, ice cream straight out of the container, long game nights with friends, and dreaming aloud about a backyard firepit and outdoor kitchen: a place where his wife could host and he could create warmth, both literally and figuratively. He was also a devoted "cat dad" to Nightwing, his black, dog-like cat who followed him faithfully and reflected Blake's gentle, attentive nature.

These personal joys were not separate from Blake's public service, but foundational to it. His faith, steadiness, and love for people shaped the way he served his community: quietly, consistently, and without expectation of recognition. Those same qualities were first nurtured by his loving family—his parents, Bruce and Melissa Reynolds, and his brother, Dustin—whose support and guidance helped form the character and compassion that defined Blake's life.

Long before the public knew his name, Blake Reynolds lived as a hero through faithful service, offering his life day by day to the people he was called to protect. We are deeply grateful for his dedicated service to Indiana's 5th Congressional District and the lasting impact he made on our community.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF OFFICER JOHN BARTHOLOMEW

HON. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life, service, and sacrifice of Chicago Police Officer John Bartholomew who gave his life in the line of duty.

Officer Bartholomew embodied the very best of public service. Each day, he served Illinois with a commitment not only to uphold the law, but to safeguard the dignity, safety, and well-being of every member of his community. His courage was not defined by a single moment, but by a long career marked by acts of bravery, compassion, and integrity.

In neighborhoods across Chicago, Officer Bartholomew was a trusted presence, a source of reassurance, and a symbol of stability. Whether responding to emergencies or building relationships with the community, he carried out his duties with professionalism and humanity. His loss is felt deeply not only by his fellow officers, but by the countless individuals whose lives he touched.

We must also recognize the profound sacrifice made by his family, who shared him with a profession that demands so much and carries severe risk. Their grief is shared by an entire city and state that will not forget Officer Bartholomew's service.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Officer John Bartholomew. May his memory be a blessing, and may we carry forward his legacy of service and courage.

HONORING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY
OF BOB WALSH

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 honor Bob Walsh, a distinguished member of the Bernardsville community, as he celebrates his 100th birthday—a milestone that reflects a century of service, character, and devotion to country and community.

Bob Walsh is a proud veteran of the United States Marine Corps, having served honorably as a radio telephone operator and radar operator in the Pacific Theater during World War II. In answering our Nation's call, he demonstrated the courage, duty, and sacrifice that define the American servicemember. His exemplary service earned him the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with one Bronze Star, the Army of Occupation Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal.

Following the war, Bob Walsh continued to embody the highest ideals of citizenship. Through his integrity, kindness, and quiet leadership, he has earned the admiration of all who know him. He remains an active and proud member of the Bernardsville VFW Memorial Post 7858, continuing a lifetime of commitment to fellow veterans and community members.

Bob Walsh's life stands as a testament to the spirit of the Greatest Generation—a generation whose strength of character and unwavering patriotism shaped our Nation. His story inspires all of us and serves as a reminder of the enduring values that strengthen our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Bob Walsh's 100 years of life, honoring his distinguished military service, and expressing our profound gratitude for his contributions to our Nation. We extend our warmest wishes to him and his family on this remarkable occasion.