

Social Services. Through hard work, vision, and exemplary leadership, he rose through the ranks to become Deputy State Director. His dedication to public service earned him numerous accolades, including the Order of the Palmetto, South Carolina's highest civilian honor, the Silver Crescent Award, a Concurrent Resolution for Public Service from the South Carolina General Assembly, and the South Carolina State Employee of the Year Award. It was during his service in South Carolina's State government that he and I formed a lasting friendship.

Even after retiring from the Department of Social Services in 2001, Mr. Rearden continued to devote himself to public service. His efforts have been recognized by organizations throughout South Carolina, including the Columbia Urban League, the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, and the South Carolina State Employees Association.

He also served on numerous boards and organizations, including the American Lung Association, Central South Carolina Alliance, Babcock Center, Salvation Army Advisory Board, Richland County Planning Commission, and the South Carolina State Employees Association. He chaired the Richland-Lexington Airport Commission and served as Vice Chairman of the South Carolina Highway Commission.

Throughout his life, faith has remained a cornerstone of Mr. Rearden's character. He faithfully served as a Deacon at First Nazareth Baptist Church, a Board Member of the United Baptist Deacons of Columbia, and Chairman of the Deacon Ministry at First Calvary Baptist Church. His unwavering commitment to his church has touched countless lives and strengthened the communities he has served.

Harrison has always believed in the power of service, the importance of community, and the value of treating every person with dignity and respect. South Carolina is stronger because of his contributions, and countless individuals have benefited from his wisdom, compassion, and example.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in celebrating the 90th birthday of my good friend and mentor, Harrison Rearden. I thank him for a lifetime of service and wish him continued health, happiness, and blessings in the years ahead.

HONORING CORPORAL EMILEE SHACKLEFORD

**HON. CLAY FULLER**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 4, 2026*

Mr. FULLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated public servant and outstanding law enforcement officer protecting Georgia's 14th District: Georgia State Patrol Corporal Emilee Shackelford.

Corporal Shackelford embodies the true spirit of the badge. She recently shared that at the beginning of every shift, she laces up her boots and places her badge over her heart, knowing she is giving her absolute full commitment to keeping her community safe. She entered law enforcement to make a deeply positive difference, and she is doing exactly that every single day.

Recently, Corporal Shackelford was the target of unfair media attacks simply for being

highly effective at her job. For enforcing the law and holding unlicensed drivers accountable on our roads, referring any illegal immigrants she apprehends to federal immigration officials.

Media reports sought to attack her for being responsible for 78 percent of her agency's illegal immigrant arrests in Walker County.

I rise to praise her for being responsible for 78 percent of her agency's Walker County arrests, and hope that her colleagues will rise to meet her example.

In a time when the rule of law is frequently undermined, she refused to back down. She stood strong for public safety, and she has earned the overwhelming respect and gratitude of the citizens she protects, putting them first.

The people of Northwest Georgia are grateful for her courage, her resilience, and her steadfast service. It is my distinct privilege to recognize Corporal Emilee Shackelford today.

HONORING BENJAMIN TWIGGS FOR 60 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE IN MICHIGAN'S CHERRY INDUSTRY

**HON. JACK BERGMAN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 4, 2026*

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and recognize Benjamin Twiggs, "The Original Cherry Store," as they celebrate 60 years of offering the finest cherry products in the country.

Since 1966, Benjamin Twiggs has crafted cherry goods from 100 percent homegrown Michigan fruit, providing beloved treats for locals and visitors alike. As part of the larger cherry industry, their multigenerational enterprise has helped make Traverse City, the cherry capital of the world.

Benjamin Twiggs is owned by Leisa Eckerle Hankins, a fifth-generation Leelanau County cherry farmer and one of the most respected leaders in the Michigan cherry industry. The Eckerle family farm, operated by Leisa's parents, Jim and Shirley, spans more than 300 acres in Suttons Bay and includes six additional farms across Leelanau County, encompassing more than 20,000 cherry, peach, and apple trees. Leisa's parents, husband, and children work the farm year-round, and her son, Zach, plans to eventually take over the family business. The Eckerle family represents the best of Northern Michigan—hard work, strong family roots, and a deep commitment to their community.

To advocate for herself and her fellow farmers, Leisa founded the Michigan Cherry Growers Alliance in 2024, helping give cherry farmers a stronger voice at the legislative level. This past April, she was appointed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer to the Michigan Cherry Committee, a state-level body established to create greater marketing opportunities for Michigan's cherry growers. Her work as owner of Benjamin Twiggs and as an industry leader has helped strengthen and revitalize Michigan's cherry industry.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Benjamin Twiggs, "The Original Cherry Store," for 60 years of dedicated service to Traverse City and the cherry industry of Northern Michigan. On behalf of Michigan's 1st Congress-

sional District, I want to thank Leisa and the Eckerle family for their hard work, dedication, and stewardship of a proud Northern Michigan tradition, and wish them continued success in the years ahead.

RECOGNIZING THE 300TH ANNIVERSARY OF OLD FORT NIAGARA

**HON. CLAUDIA TENNEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 4, 2026*

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 300th anniversary of Old Fort Niagara, one of the most significant historic landmarks in the United States. Established by the French in 1726 at the strategic junction of the Niagara River and Lake Ontario, Old Fort Niagara has stood for three centuries as a symbol of our Nation's rich history, resilience, and enduring spirit.

Occupied at various times throughout history by French, British, and American forces, the fort has played a pivotal role in major conflicts, including the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, and the War of 1812. Today, it continues to honor the legacy of the soldiers who defended it, preserving their stories as a testament to the military service and sacrifice that helped shape our Nation.

As Old Fort Niagara commemorates its 300th anniversary, we honor the generations of soldiers, civilians, historians, educators, and volunteers who have worked tirelessly to preserve and protect this site. Their dedication ensures that future generations will continue to learn from and value the rich history and legacy of this landmark.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Old Fort Niagara on its 300th anniversary and in recognizing the educators, historians, and volunteers who have made invaluable contributions to the preservation of American history.

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HAMPTON ALUMNAE CHAPTER OF DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.

**HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 4, 2026*

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Hampton Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, as it celebrates 75 years of service to the Hampton Roads community. Chartered in 1951 and tracing its roots to the Beta Kappa Chapter established in 1937, the Hampton Alumnae Chapter has built a proud legacy of sisterhood, scholarship, service, and social action that continues to strengthen our communities today.

Throughout its history, the chapter has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to improving the lives of others. Its members have supported educational opportunities through scholarships and youth mentoring programs, helped address food insecurity through partnerships with the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank, and invested in communities both

locally and abroad through projects ranging from Habitat for Humanity homes to water wells in Haiti and Kenya. The chapter's work reflects a deep commitment to service and to expanding opportunity for all.

The Hampton Alumnae Chapter has also been a leader in promoting health and wellness, economic empowerment, and civic engagement. Through voter registration efforts, public forums, financial literacy programs, wellness initiatives, and youth leadership development, the chapter has helped residents become more informed, engaged, and empowered members of their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Hampton Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, for 75 years of dedicated service and community leadership. I congratulate its members, past and present, on this milestone anniversary and thank them for the lasting impact they have made on Hampton Roads and beyond.

#### POLISH-AMERICAN SOLIDARITY

### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 4, 2026*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Pawel Kowal, hand delivered a Resolution from the Parliament of Poland to Armed Services Committee Chairman, MIKE ROGERS, and Helsinki Commission Chairman, JOE WILSON, reaffirming solidarity of Poland and the United States. Friendship between the people of America with the people of Poland has never been stronger with the bonds of 8.3 million Polish-Americans in all states and territories. I include in the RECORD the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION OF THE SEMJ OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND OF MAY 29, 2026 ON POLISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Two hundred and fifty years ago, on July 4, 1776, the American Congress adopted the Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America, commonly known as the Declaration of Independence. Since the very beginnings of the history of the United States, close ties between Americans and Poles also began to develop. The Declaration of Independence, together with the United States Constitution, adopted in later years, embodied the political ideals of the Enlightenment and enshrined values that have continued to inspire many nations around the world to this day—the ideas of freedom, equality, human rights, as well as the separation and balance of powers. Above all, these documents solidified the conviction that power derives from the nation. Similar tendencies and ideals led to the adoption of the Constitution of 3 May in Poland in 1791—the second constitution in the world and the first modern constitution in Europe.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland emphasizes that a profound love of freedom and a shared understanding of democratic ideals impelled the heroes of Poland's quest for independence to engage in the American Revolution and in the fight for the independence of the United States of America. Through their many initiatives, Tadeusz Kościuszko and Kazimierz Pulaski helped de-

fend the independence of the nascent American state. In the years that followed, the Polish-American bond forged in battle was put to the test on numerous occasions and was sealed in blood by the sacrifices made by soldiers of both nations during joint combat missions.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland expresses its appreciation for the role of the Polish diaspora in the United States. For generations, Poles emigrated to America and—through their labor—contributed to the economic success of the United States, whilst at the same time preserving the memory of their homeland in their hearts and cultivating the traditions of their ancestors. In many cases they prepared themselves to fight for Poland's independence and for the rebuilding of the state once freedom had been regained.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland recalls with respect and gratitude the role of the United States in restoring Poland's independence after First World War. The position taken by the United States effectively contributed to achieving the goal pursued by several generations of Poles.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland further emphasizes that the United States made a special contribution to the liberation of Poland from the communist regime, the restoration of its independence, and to advancing the process of systemic transformation initiated in 1989. The support of the United States for Poland's accession to NATO in 1999 was crucial to ensuring the security of a free Poland and its place within the Euro-Atlantic community.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland acknowledges the importance of the contemporary parliamentary relations with the Congress of the United States. We emphasize that the Polish-American relations, grounded in the pursuit of shared ideals, are fundamental to the security of our state. Poland is an important ally of the United States, especially within the context of the eastern flank of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This is demonstrated by the permanent presence of the United States Armed Forces troops in Poland.

The Sejm of the Republic of Poland underscores that the Polish-American friendship is important to Polish society and is recognized as such across political lines. On the special occasion of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America and of the relations that have developed between our nations, we wish the American people prosperity in the spirit of the ideals that have shaped the public life of the United States.

#### ENSHRINING THE WORDS OF CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR BILL MONNING IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY

### HON. JIMMY PANETTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 4, 2026*

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to include in the RECORD a Commencement Ceremony speech by Senator Bill Monning, J.D. (Ret.), given to the 2026 spring graduates of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies:

Thank you, Provost McCauley, Vice President Dayton-Johnson, Distinguished Guests, Faculty, and Graduates: thank you for the honor of addressing this year's graduating class.

Congratulations to MIIS Graduate Student Speaker Julena Wuer on your Master of Arts

in Translation and Localization Management and your amazing journey, so far! We look forward to hearing your remarks!

To the graduates' families: thank you for your support of these graduates who today make you proud and who will continue to stand on your shoulders of love and support.

To the faculty and staff of MIIS, we thank each and all of you for your dedication to this graduating class, and for all who came before. Thank you!

I want to thank the City of Monterey and Mayor Tyllier Williamson for your enduring support and partnership with MIIS through the years and for hosting us today in front of the Monterey City Hall and the historic Colton Hall. Thank you!

Thank you to the staff and volunteers who have helped organize and coordinate today's ceremony; to the student interpreters; and to Mike Gillen on the bagpipes. Thank you.

And, to the 2026 SPRING GRADUATES of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, CONGRATULATIONS!

As we join in celebration of the 2026 Spring graduates, we also carry the memories of those who did so much to build the Institute who have left us, but who have also have left their marks: President Emeritus Dr. Robert Gard and professors Jan Black, Tsuneo Akaha, Edgard Coley, Glynn Wood, and all those who gave so much to so many. We carry you in our hearts.

As a former professor of international negotiation and conflict resolution and as a director of the Graduate Program on Trade and Commercial Diplomacy founded by Geza Feketekuty, who joins us today, I can state that my seventeen years teaching at MIIS were among the most rewarding of my career.

I had prepared to deliver a bit of a eulogy for MIIS based on the planned closure of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. We are thrilled today to be able to acknowledge the positive progress with Soka University and prospects for the continued operations, in some form, of the Monterey Institute of International Studies, Soka University, USA. Thanks to all of the MIIS and Soka University leaders who have worked hard to offer this encouraging public declaration of intention.

Graduates, today many of you are joined by your families of origin. Some of you have family who are unable to join you here today, but they are with you in spirit as they have supported your pursuit of this special education and training. Today you join another family, the family of MIIS graduates.

You now become part of a powerful force that has been recognized in Washington, D.C. and internationally as "the MIIS Mafia". While the term "mafia" may have a negative connotation—As used, it is intended to suggest an empowering connection among a family of graduates who bring recognized excellence in a number of professional skills.

As we talk about the MIIS family, we are really talking about the power of human connections. In my experience at MIIS, we saw these human connections at work in the Middle East.

For three years, Global Majority, a non-profit formed by MIIS students, organized training programs in Amman, Jordan, hosted by the United Nations Peace University that included Palestinian and Israeli students along with U.S. and international students.

Each year, when the students first convened, there was visible tension—expressions of animosity and mistrust between the Palestinian and Israeli students—most had never talked to "the other".

One of our program's leaders and instructors was a Palestinian student from Gaza who was also a student at MIIS—Ramiz Younis. Ramiz used his MIIS training and