

Union, Raiz was built on a belief that when communities invest in one another, families thrive. Through generations of change and challenge, Raiz has remained a trusted partner for teachers, workers, and families across our region. Since 2019, more than 53,000 individuals have participated in Raiz's financial education programs, helping families build stronger financial futures. Raiz has also awarded more than 160 scholarships, grants, and community awards, while employees have contributed more than 4,100 hours in support of local organizations and initiatives.

Featured on the award-winning TV show Opportunity Knocks, Raiz was highlighted for their excellence as a financial leader, helping El Pasoans purchase homes, build credit, overcome financial challenges, and build brighter futures. I congratulate Raiz Federal Credit Union on this remarkable milestone and wish them continued success in the years ahead.

HONORING CHAMBERS COUNTY  
JUDGE FRANK JAMES "JIMMY"  
SYLVIA, JR.

**HON. BRIAN BABIN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 18, 2026*

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a good friend and respected leader of Chambers County, Texas—County Judge Frank James "Jimmy" Sylvia, Jr. For three decades, Judge Sylvia has guided Chambers County through a remarkable period of growth and transformation. On December 31, 2026, Judge Sylvia will retire from public office as the longest-serving county judge in Texas, concluding a distinguished career.

Judge Sylvia was born on October 5, 1955, in Seattle, Washington, but moved to Texas as soon as he could. The Sylvia family has been a pillar of the Old River community in Chambers County for decades. Jimmy was a standout athlete on the 1971 Barbers Hill High School football team, which won the Class 1 A co-state championship. He graduated from Barbers Hill in 1974 and was named a Distinguished Alumnus in 2010. Judge Sylvia continued his football and academic pursuits at Sam Houston State University, where he graduated in 1979. Jimmy has often attributed the values he learned playing team sports to his success in serving the public. Anyone who has worked with him knows that to be true. Judge Sylvia's service to Chambers County began in 1993, when he was elected Commissioner for Precinct 3. Following the timely passing of County Judge Oscar Nelson, he was appointed to serve as County Judge, assuming the responsibilities as the chief administrator and budget officer of Chambers County. He was later elected to the position in 1998 and concludes his seventh consecutive four-year term at the end of this year.

Over the last decade, Chambers County has been one of the fastest-growing counties in the nation and has become one of the most desirable places to live in the Greater Houston area. During his tenure in office, the county population has more than doubled, as has the number of county employees. Additionally, the county budget expanded from \$8.5 million in 1993 to \$75.7 million today. Judge Sylvia has

balanced the needs of rural rice-farming communities, one of the largest and most critical petrochemical complexes in the world, and the development of once-rural communities as the Houston region migrates further east.

In addition to his administrative and judicial responsibilities, Judge Sylvia serves as the county's chief emergency management official. During his tenure, Jimmy has been a steady hand overseeing responses to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Humberto, Gustav, Ike, Harvey, Imelda, Laura, Beta, and Beryl, as well as the 2019 Atlas Air Crash, COVID-19, Winter Storm Uri, and many others. His expertise has been widely recognized across Texas, and he has frequently been invited to speak at training programs for county judges, offering guidance on disaster response and emergency operations. For 17 years, Judge Sylvia has hosted a Hurricane Workshop that brings together local, state, and federal organizations to prepare for hurricane season. In May of this year, he was awarded the Texas Emergency Management Leadership Award in recognition of his achievements that have demonstrated a positive and significant impact on emergency management programs or community resilience, a well-deserved honor for a public servant who leads with integrity and a servant's heart.

I have worked closely with Judge Sylvia on many projects, and the most significant was the de-obligation of \$9 million of Hurricane Ike cleanup debt that FEMA erroneously charged to Chambers County. His diligence and advocacy were instrumental in resolving that issue. Mr. Speaker, on December 31, 2026, Judge Jimmy Sylvia will conclude three decades of distinguished public service. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to my friend and offer my best wishes to his wife, Laura Lou, their children, and grandchildren as they embark on the next chapter of their lives. May God bless Chambers County, and may He continue to bless the Sylvia family.

HONORING MS. KRISTY EMBRY

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 18, 2026*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Ms. Kristy Embry upon the occasion of her retirement after twenty-five years of distinguished service with Disability Determination Services.

Ms. Embry has dedicated her professional career to serving the citizens of Mississippi with excellence, integrity, and compassion. A graduate of Mississippi State University in 1998, she began her career with Disability Determination Services in 2001, embarking on a path of public service that would positively impact countless individuals and families across our state.

In 2004, Ms. Embry joined the Division of Legislative Relations, where she worked closely with Members of Congress and state legislators regarding Social Security disability cases. Through her professionalism, responsiveness, and deep knowledge of the disability determination process, she became a trusted resource for legislative offices and constituents seeking assistance.

Her dedication and leadership led to her promotion as Director of the Non-Vocational

Legislative Relations Team in 2015. In this role, she has faithfully served for more than a decade, overseeing critical operations and helping ensure that Mississippians receive the attention and support they deserve. Her commitment to public service has earned the respect and admiration of colleagues, elected officials, and citizens alike.

Ms. Embry is the daughter of William "Bill" Norton and Jonnelle "Jonnie" Norton. In 2004, she married Scott Embry, and together they raised their daughter, Caroline Embry. Beyond her professional accomplishments, she enjoys cooking, baking, and traveling, passions that reflect her warm spirit and love for family and community.

On June 30, 2026, Ms. Embry will conclude a remarkable career marked by dedication, leadership, and faithful service to the people of Mississippi. Her contributions to Disability Determination Services and to the legislative community have left a lasting legacy that will be felt for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Kristy Embry for her outstanding career and unwavering commitment to public service. We congratulate her on her well-earned retirement and extend our sincere gratitude and best wishes for happiness, good health, and success in the years ahead.

HONORING THE LIFE OF GEDONE  
RAULERSON PRACHAR

**HON. AARON BEAN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 18, 2026*

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, some people spend a lifetime building a community. Others become the heart of one. In Baker County, Florida, that person was Gedone Raulerson Prachar.

Those who knew Gedone often said she never met a stranger. Whether she was welcoming someone into her home, serving her community, or advocating for causes she believed in, she had a unique gift of bringing people together and making them feel like family.

Today, I rise to honor the life and legacy of this remarkable Floridian.

Gedone was a pioneer in local civic engagement. She established the Baker County Women's Republican Club, opening doors for women to participate in public service and enhancing grassroots leadership within the community.

She was an active member of the GFWC Woman's Club of Macclenny, where she dedicated herself to service and supporting the community. Whether through organized efforts or small acts of kindness, Gedone was always ready to help.

Above all, Gedone cherished her family. She shared 46 wonderful years of marriage with her beloved husband, Chuck, and took great pride in her family, including her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, whose lives were enriched by her love, support, and wisdom.

Mr. Speaker, as we remember Gedone, we celebrate a life well lived and a legacy that will continue to be felt throughout Northeast Florida. Her kindness, leadership, and servant's heart made her the kind of person every community hopes to have and never forgets.

May her memory be a blessing, and may her example continue to inspire us all.

HONORING JANET WINTER'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

**HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 18, 2026*

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Janet Winter as she celebrates her 100th birthday.

Born on June 20, 1926, Janet spent her early years in Larchmont, New York, and South Chatham, Massachusetts. With a passion for art, Janet earned both her bachelor's degree from Smith College and master's degree from Ohio State University in art history. It was this talent that brought her to General

Electric, where she worked in advertising and met the love of her life, Robert "Bob" Asa Winter. They married in 1954 and had two children.

The family later moved to East Greenwich, Rhode Island, where Janet continued her studies at the Rhode Island School of Design, before she and Bob moved to Orleans, Massachusetts, 1985. They became active volunteers at the Church of the Holy Spirit, where Janet especially enjoyed her work with the Sunday school and bell choir. Together, Janet and Bob rediscovered their love for travel and took many trips overseas.

A lifelong artist, Janet has excelled in many mediums over the years, progressing from Crayolas to oils, watercolors, ink, and colored pencils. She found early success in painting watercolor landscapes and later in commercial work, creating cards, coloring books, jigsaw puzzles, calendars, and novelty items for several greeting card companies. Janet has won

many awards for her work and has been highlighted in several one-woman museum shows. She has also written and published three Christmas books for children. Although retired from commercial work, Janet continues to create colored pencils illustrations for cards and prints, including "grin and bear it" cards featuring teddy bears with masks during the pandemic.

On June 20, 2026, Janet will celebrate her 100th birthday surrounded by friends and family. Although Bob and her children are no longer with us, Janet enjoys spending time with her two grandchildren, extended family, and many good friends with whom she is grateful to share her "golden years."

Mr. Speaker. I am proud to honor Janet Winter, and I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating a century well lived and wishing Janet many more years of health and happiness.