Firefighter Steve Hailey. While today we recognize Firefighter Hailey, this award reflects the commitment to duty, professionalism, and public safety that defines the entire department.

As we mark the 40th anniversary of the Valor Awards, we are proud to celebrate this tradition that has stood as the highest recognition of courage within the Dumfries Volunteer Fire Department. Since inception, these awards have honored generations of first responders who answered the call when it mattered most.

Each recipient exemplifies true valor, facing danger without hesitation, providing life-saving aid, and prioritizing the safety of others in the most challenging emergencies. Their courage and compassion strengthen the bonds within our community, fostering trust, resilience, and a shared sense of security. Today, we honor their collective bravery and commitment to public service.

Whether responding to fires, medical emergencies, or natural disasters, these individuals demonstrate an unyielding commitment to preserving life and property. Their professionalism and readiness in the face of uncertainty set an example for us all and serve as a reminder of the impact that first responders have on the lives of those they protect. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Dumfries Volunteer Fire Department and Firefighter Hailey for their remarkable contributions to our community.

HONORING THE VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF LAKE COUNTY'S 100-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

HON. BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2026

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County (VACLC) as it celebrates 100 years of service to the veterans and families of Lake County, Illinois.

Founded in 1926, the VACLC came into being when local veterans recognized the need for a centralized organization dedicated to serving veterans and their families. For a century, the VACLC has worked tirelessly to ensure that the men and women who served our Nation receive the benefits, resources, and support they have earned through their sacrifice. What began as a single service office has become a well-respected veteran's service organization in Illinois and has aided veterans from all eras and conflicts.

Today, the Commission offers a broad range of essential services, including disability claims advocacy, financial assistance, burial benefits, and survivors' benefits. The VACLC also provides professional representation for veterans navigating the claims and appeals process, ensuring that those who have served our country receive the benefits which they have earned and deserve. Notably, the VACLC provides these services free of charge as part of the Commission's unwavering commitment to serving veterans and their families.

The Commission's continued success is due in large part to the dedication of its leadership and staff. Led by Executive Director Andrew Tangen since 2017, the VACLC has expanded its impact and strengthened its service to veterans throughout Lake County. A United States Navy veteran who served eight deployments and attained the rank of Lieutenant Commander, Mr. Tangen has brought his extensive military, legal, and professional experience to the Commission. His leadership has positioned the organization for continued success in serving the growing needs of today's veterans.

Working closely with local governments, community organizations, and veteran advocates throughout Lake County, the VACLC continues to ensure that no veteran is left behind.

I am especially proud of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County's partnership with my office. Every year the VACLC has joined me honoring our local veterans at my annual Veterans Day Breakfast and has partnered with my staff to help share our community's gratitude through our annual Valentines for Veterans program. Their commitment to our veterans extends far beyond the many services they provide.

Mr. Speaker, the Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County embodies the values of service, dedication, and community that make my district a desired home for so many veterans. As the VACLC celebrates their centennial anniversary, I congratulate its leadership, staff, volunteers, and clients on this remarkable milestone and thank them for 100 years of outstanding service to our veterans. I look forward to seeing the Commission continue its important mission for many years to come.

HONORING GUADALUPE TOWN MANAGER JEFF KULAGA'S PUBLIC SERVICE CAREER

HON. YASSAMIN ANSARI

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2026

Ms. ANSARI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Jeff Kulaga upon his retirement as Town Manager of the Town of Guadalupe, Arizona, and to thank him for more than three decades of distinguished public service to communities across our state.

Since his unanimous appointment as Town Manager and Town Clerk in 2017, Jeff Kulaga has served the people of Guadalupe with integrity, professionalism, and an unwavering commitment to community improvement. In addition to overseeing the Town's day-to-day operations and implementing Town Council policy, he has taken on numerous responsibilities including serving as Guadalupe's Chief Financial Officer, Zoning Administrator, Business License Administrator, Cemetery Administrator, and Community Development Director. Under his leadership, the Town has continued to advance opportunities for residents while responsibly managing an annual budget of more than $11 million.

Jeff's career in public service spans more than 30 years in Arizona municipal government. Prior to his time in Guadalupe, he served as Assistant City Manager for the City of Tempe and held multiple leadership roles in Mesa and Scottsdale, including Government Relations Director and Executive Assistant to the Mayor. Throughout each chapter of his career, he has earned the respect of colleagues, elected officials, and community members alike for his thoughtful leadership and collaborative approach to governance.

Our office has had the privilege of working closely with Jeff on projects that directly improve the quality of life for Guadalupe residents. Most notably, we were proud to partner with the Town to help secure $2 million for the refurbishment of Biehn Colony Park, an investment that will help preserve and revitalize an important community space for generations to come. Jeff's advocacy for Guadalupe and his ability to bring partners together played an instrumental role in advancing this effort.

A proud ''Double Devil,'' Jeff earned both his Bachelor of Science degree and Master's degree in Public Administration from Arizona State University. He has remained deeply engaged in civic and professional organizations throughout his career, including the Arizona City and County Management Association, the Arizona Municipal Clerks Association, and the Urban Land Institute.

Jeff Kulaga's career reflects the very best of public service: steady leadership, institutional knowledge, and a deep belief in serving others. On behalf of Arizona's 3rd Congressional District, I extend my sincere gratitude for his years of service and wish him, his family, and loved ones continued success and fulfillment in this next chapter.

TRIBUTE TO TAYLOR COLE

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2026

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Taylor Cole, an American patriot who made incredible contributions to our national defense, who was killed in a tragic motorcycle accident in the Cajon Pass on Sunday, April 5, 2026. Taylor served as the Chief Technology Officer at the Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Corona Division and will be deeply missed.

After earning a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering at the University of California, Riverside, Taylor began his career at NSWC Corona in 2003 as a mechanical engineer. Taylor's work and creative approach to complex Navy challenges took him across the globe, including as a tactical mathematician working side-by-side with deployed service members. He developed an entirely novel method to predict the patterns of improvised explosive devices in response to attacks to servicemembers in Afghanistan and Iraq. His exceptional service earned him the Global War on Terrorism medal—a rare achievement for a civilian—and selection as a Chief of Naval Operations Strategic Studies Fellow. A visionary leader and intellectual trailblazer, Taylor rose to become Chief Technology Officer in 2018. In this role, he fearlessly led the command's research and development programs, drove the command's culture of innovation, and mentored college students from his alma mater in solving naval problems.

In his personal life, Taylor lived life to the absolute fullest. He was a seven-time national skydiving champion and a member of the United States Parachute Team. Taylor was also considered one of the top BASE jumpers in the world, with more than seventeen years of active jumping and over a thousand jumps to his name. He jumped from the world's largest glass-bottom skywalk in Chongqing, China, 2,300 feet over the Yangtze River, as well as a speed-flying descent off Cucamonga Peak, launching from 8,800 feet.

Taylor is survived by his daughter, Tessa Cole; mother, Sherde Cole; sisters, Lori Pucci and husband, Steve, Stefani Cole Waters and husband, Patrick; niece and nephews, Cole Bertz, Katelyn and Andrew Pucci, Ozzy Waters, as well as many aunts, uncles, and cousins. I extend my personal and heartfelt condolences to the Cole family, his friends, colleagues, and everyone fortunate enough to know Taylor. Although he may be gone, the many contributions he made to our national security and country will make a long lasting impact.

HONORING THE PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

HON. EUGENE SIMON VINDMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2026

Mr. VINDMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the Prince William County Sheriff's Office and to recognize one of its distinguished members who has received a Merit Award: Deputy Michelle Hand. While today we recognize Deputy Hand, this award reflects the commitment to duty, professionalism, and public safety that defines the entire Sheriff's Office.

As we mark the 40th anniversary of the Valor Awards, we are proud to celebrate this tradition that has stood as the highest recognition of courage within the Prince William County Sheriff's Office. Since inception, these awards have honored generations of first responders who answered the call when it mattered most.

Whether in the courtroom, on transport duty, or assisting during critical incidents, members of the Sheriff's Office play a vital role in maintaining the safety and order of our community.

Today, we recognize the extraordinary actions of Deputy Hand, whose bravery and dedication serve as powerful examples of the values upheld by the Prince William County Sheriff's Office. Her service reminds us that heroism is not measured by numbers, but by the impact one person can have through a single courageous act.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Prince William County Sheriff's Office for their remarkable contributions to our community.

NATIVE AMERICAN ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Native American Entrepreneurial Opportunity Act, introduced by my colleague, Representative SHARICE DAVIDS of Kansas, and co-sponsored by me.

The Small Business Administration's Office of Native American Affairs works with Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian Organizations to provide entrepreneurial development, contracting and capital access and to support the establishment and expansion of small businesses owned or controlled by our Nation's indigenous peoples, including Native Hawaiians. It helps our Nation remain focused on our Native American, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian communities and their vital contributions to our national and local economies.

This bill will provide formal, statutory authority for the office so it can continue its efforts. Statutorily authorizing the Office of Native American Affairs will ensure continued access to federal programs and services that support entrepreneurs from our indigenous peoples across the country and help them launch and grow small businesses, and in turn, promote economic development in their communities.

This bill will especially help businesses in my home state of Hawaii. Small businesses are the lifeblood of Hawaii, and it is essential to equip Native Hawaiian-owned small businesses with the tools and resources they need to start, grow and thrive in our communities.

I urge my colleagues to join me in passing this bill and supporting small businesses owned by our Nation's indigenous peoples.

RECOGNIZING GARY CHAPMAN FOR BEING NAMED THE DICKINSON COUNTY VETERAN OF THE YEAR

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2026

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Gary Chapman for being named Dickinson County Veteran of the Year. This well-deserved honor reflects his steadfast dedication to his fellow Servicemembers, the communities throughout Michigan's Upper Peninsula, and our Nation.

Gary served our Nation honorably from July 22, 1970, to July 21, 1973, with service in the Vietnam War from 1971 to 1973. Throughout his time in uniform, Gary earned numerous awards and decorations, including the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with one Bronze Service Star, the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Marksmanship Badge, and two Overseas Service Bars. Following his honorable discharge, Gary has continued serving his community for three decades as a custodian and bus driver for the Breitung Township School District.

Gary's dedication to service did not end when he hung up the uniform. For more than 40 years, he has faithfully volunteered with American Legion Post No. 363, where he has served as Adjutant. Recognizing the importance of investing in our Nation's youth, he created the first ever Sons of the Legion for Post No. 363 in the early 2000's and continues to host its monthly meetings at his home. Every year he plans and organizes the Kingsford Memorial Day Program at the Quinnesec Cemetery and proudly volunteers countless hours selling Poppies during the American Legion fundraiser event.

His efforts exemplify some of the very best American values: selflessness, determination, and a steadfast commitment to community.

Mr. Speaker, let us all join in recognizing Mr. Gary Chapman for being named Dickinson County Veteran of the Year. I thank him for his enduring commitment to Veterans, his community, and our great Nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANN WAGNER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2026

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker I regret that I was not present for Roll Call Votes on June 24, 2026. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 225, and YEA on Roll Call No. 226.