

has helped advance conversations surrounding HIV, healthcare disparities, and equitable access to care for underserved communities. His work has reached audiences across the United States and internationally while remaining rooted in service to Central Florida communities.

Through leadership, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to improving lives, José continues to advance health equity, strengthen communities, and expand opportunities for those most in need.

HOUSING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, the 21st Century Road to Housing Act is historic legislation that will improve housing affordability and access in this country for millions of Americans. This legislation would not have been possible without the contributions of the minority professional staff of the Committee, who worked for months with advocacy groups, Members of Congress, and other stakeholders on drafting and perfecting this legislation. Their staff work was essential to the success of this legislation.

I would like to acknowledge and include in the RECORD the following staff members for their superlative work on this important bill:

Melissa Anoh, Professional Staff Member; Noelle Melton, Director of Housing; Chelsea Crittle, Policy Director; Glen Sears, Director of Consumer Protection and Financial Institutions; Herline Mathieu, Communications Director; Marcos Manosalvas, Deputy Communications Director; David Fernandez, Chief Counsel; Kristofor Erickson, Deputy Staff Director; and Charla Ouertatani, Staff Director.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANGIE CRAIG

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Ms. CRAIG. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes yesterday. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 228, H.R. 7757, and YEA on Roll Call No. 229, H.R. 7128.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSH BRECHEEN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Mr. BRECHEEN. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote due to a voting card issue prior to close of the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 228.

HONORING BRANDON BRACALELLEWELLYN AS A DISTINGUISHED LEADER IN CENTRAL FLORIDA FOR LGBTQ+ PRIDE

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Brandon Bracale-Llewellyn as a Distinguished Leader in Central Florida for LGBTQ+ Pride Month. Brandon Bracale-Llewellyn is a respected business owner, community leader, and advocate whose dedication to Central Florida's LGBTQ+ community has made a lasting impact throughout the region. Born in Hershey, Pennsylvania, Brandon is the owner of Savoy Orlando, one of Central Florida's most prominent LGBTQ+ entertainment venues and a longstanding gathering place that has fostered community, inclusion, and support for countless individuals over the years.

Through both his personal philanthropy and leadership as a business owner, Brandon has donated significant time, resources, and financial support to numerous nonprofit organizations serving the LGBTQ+ community and beyond. His commitment to public service extends through his volunteer leadership, including serving as president of the Orange County Rainbow Democrats and currently serving on the Board of Directors for the LGBTQ+ Center Orlando.

In recognition of his dedication to advocacy and community engagement, Brandon was honored with the prestigious Chase Smith Award in 2019, recognizing his outstanding contributions to equality, civic involvement, and public service.

Beyond his professional and community accomplishments, Brandon values spending time with family in Pennsylvania and enjoys traveling to Mexico with his partner, Alan. His commitment to service, leadership, and community building continues to strengthen Central Florida and inspire those around him.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUZ M. RIVAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Ms. RIVAS. Mr. Speaker, due to a technical issue on my voting card, my vote was not recorded. Had the vote been recorded, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 228, final passage of H.R. 7757 as amended.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRAD KNOTT

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Mr. KNOTT. Mr. Speaker, due to an unforeseen conflict, I was unable to cast my vote for H.R. 7757, the KIDS Act.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 228.

HONORING MINNESOTA STATE SENATOR STEVE CWODZINSKI ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. KELLY MORRISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Ms. MORRISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Minnesota State Senator Steve Cwodzinski for his decade-long service to the people of Minnesota and his lifelong dedication to education, civic engagement, and public service.

Born in Superior, Wisconsin, Senator Cwodzinski earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees in education from the University of Minnesota and spent more than 30 years teaching government and history at Eden Prairie High School. Through his decades in the classroom, he inspired generations of students to become informed and engaged citizens, and his extraordinary dedication to education earned him the Presidential Scholar's Influential Teacher Award.

Senator Cwodzinski brought that same passion for public service to the Minnesota state Senate when he was first elected in 2016, representing the cities of Eden Prairie and Minnetonka with integrity and optimism. Over the course of his tenure, he served as Chair of the Senate Education Policy Committee and on the Education Finance, Elections, and State and Local Government Committees.

Drawing on his background as an educator, Senator Cwodzinski became a leading advocate for students and teachers across Minnesota. He championed civics and financial literacy graduation requirements to better prepare students for engaged citizenship and adult life, and he consistently prioritized student voices in the legislative process by regularly inviting students to testify before legislative committees and participate directly in conversations about policy. In addition to his championing of students and educators, he is a passionate advocate for protecting the Boundary Waters and chief authored legislation for permanent protection of Minnesota's crown jewel.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Senator Cwodzinski is a devoted husband to his wife, Patti, a proud father of two children, and grandfather of two grandchildren. His love of family, community, and country has shaped every aspect of his life and service.

Senator Cwodzinski's legacy will endure through the countless students he mentored, the legislation he championed, and the communities he faithfully served. On behalf of the people of Minnesota, I extend my sincere gratitude for his years of dedicated service and wish him all the best in his retirement and future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DELIA C. RAMIREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 228, and YEA on Roll Call No. 229.

TRIBUTE TO DR. CHRISTOPHER J.
SCOLESE

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Mr. CALVERT. Mr Speaker, I rise today to honor a man whose career in service to our Nation spans nearly five decades—Dr. Christopher J. Scolese—an engineer, a leader, and a quiet patriot. Dr. Scolese is retiring as Director of the National Reconnaissance Office, and it is entirely fitting that this body pause to recognize the extraordinary contributions he has made to our national security, our space enterprise, and our country.

Dr. Scolese's life in public service began in 1978, when he was commissioned as a United States Naval Officer, supporting nuclear propulsion programs for the Navy and the Department of Energy, under Admiral Hyman Rickover. It was the beginning of a career defined not by the pursuit of recognition, but by an unwavering commitment to mission. Over the decades that followed, he would serve in roles of increasing responsibility, always bringing to bear the technical rigor and steady character that would become his hallmarks.

In 1987, Dr. Scolese joined NASA, assigned to the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. Over the next three decades, he rose through every level of the agency—from systems engineer, to NASA's Chief Engineer, to Associate Administrator in the Office of Space Science, to Acting NASA Administrator, to Director of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. He oversaw some of NASA's most consequential missions, including the James Webb Space Telescope and the Earth Observing System among many others, and became one of the most respected figures in the American space community.

In August 2019, Dr. Scolese was sworn in as the 19th Director of the National Reconnaissance Office—the first NRO Director to be presidentially appointed and Senate confirmed. His tenure at the NRO was nothing short of transformational. He brought to the

position a technologist's understanding of risk, but also an irrepressible enthusiasm for the work. He worked to broaden the NRO's engagement with commercial industry and accelerate the pace of satellite development to meet the demands of an increasingly contested space environment. Dr. Scolese led the NRO's transformation to develop and field proliferated satellite architectures, expand the resilience and capacity of ground processing systems, and rapid adoption of artificial intelligence, while continuing to emphasize critical investments in science and technology.

Dr. Scolese worked to strengthen and broaden partnerships across the intelligence and defense communities, industry, and academia and was instrumental in expanding relationships with allied nations and partners.

Throughout his career, Dr. Scolese emphasized the importance of people and teamwork and the extraordinary accomplishments that can be realized through meaningful collaboration. He led with quiet strength, kindness, and patience. That is the mark of a leader whose concern for the mission outlasts his tenure.

Dr. Scolese's career spans the Cold War and the space age, the rise of commercial space, and the dawn of artificial intelligence. He served under eight presidents. He helped build, launch, and operate systems that provided American warfighters, policymakers, and intelligence analysts with the information needed to defend this Nation and save lives—often in ways that the American people will never fully know,

On behalf of a grateful Congress and a grateful Nation, I wish to express our deepest thanks to Dr. Christopher J. Scolese for his decades of selfless service. We wish him and his family every happiness in the years ahead. He has more than earned it.

CONGRATULATING DR. THOMAS
MCKEE ON EARNING THE 2026
YOOPER SUPER OF THE YEAR
AWARD

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Dr. Thomas McKee for earning the 2026 Yooper Super of the Year Award, an honor that reflects his outstanding leadership of Rudyard Area Schools.

Each year, this award is presented to a superintendent who exemplifies excellence in public education and demonstrates a deep commitment to students, educators, and community stakeholders across the Upper Peninsula. Nominated by his peers, Dr. McKee was formally recognized for his outstanding service and leadership on April 29, 2026.

Under his guidance, Rudyard Area Schools have experienced meaningful improvements to facilities and infrastructure, reinforcing the strength and identity of the district. Supporters of Dr. McKee have highlighted how he has transformed the culture of education throughout the community through steady leadership, increased expectations, and care for students and staff. His leadership has not only strengthened public education in Rudyard, but has helped advance priorities for rural sustainability, equitable school funding, and special education services across the Upper Peninsula.

Dr. McKee's dedication to public education helped cultivate a school system defined by pride, purpose, and positivity. His work stands as a model for educational leadership across Michigan and our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, let us all join in recognizing Dr. Thomas McKee on this well-deserved honor. On behalf of Michigan's 1st Congressional District, I thank him for enduring contributions to the students, families, and educators of Rudyard Area Schools and the Upper Peninsula.