

HONORING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF JEFFERSON BARRACKS

HON. ANN WAGNER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 6, 2026

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my resolution celebrating the 200th anniversary of Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis County, Missouri.

Established on July 10, 1826, Jefferson Barracks is the oldest operational military installation west of the Mississippi River and has played a remarkable role in our nation's defense. From its beginnings as the Army's first Infantry School of Practice, to its service as a major staging ground, training center, hospital, and recruitment depot through the Mexican-American War, Civil War, World War I, and beyond, Jefferson Barracks has helped shape American military history.

Today, Jefferson Barracks continues to play an active role in serving our country and our community through the Missouri National Guard, veterans' services, and historic preservation. Furthermore, the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, where more than 200,000 veterans are laid to rest, stands as a living symbol of service, sacrifice, and Missouri's enduring contribution to the defense of the United States.

I am proud to recognize the thousands of men and women who have served, trained, worked, and been honored at Jefferson Barracks over the past two centuries, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

RECOGNIZING FRANK DELUCA

HON. KAT CAMMACK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 6, 2026

Mrs. CAMMACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Frank DeLuca of Marion County, Florida, on his induction into the Florida Automobile Dealers Association Hall of Fame.

In 1978, Frank opened the doors of DeLuca Toyota in Ocala. For the next forty-six years, he built an institution that has served generations across Florida's 3rd District. Families bought their first car from Frank, and employees built their careers under his leadership. That kind of legacy is the product of a man who showed up every day and did right by the community he served.

Throughout his career, Frank received the Toyota President's Award five times and earned the J.D. Power Certified Retailer Award, a testament to the standard of excellence he upheld. His impact, however, extends far beyond his professional success. He is a man of community, always showing up for his neighbors, supporting local charities, and investing in the people and organizations that made his success possible.

Widely recognized for his philanthropy, Frank contributed more than \$17 million to education, health care, and community organizations. Through the DeLuca Family Foundation, he and his wife, Angela, have supported numerous local initiatives, including a \$4 million gift to AdventHealth Ocala in 2025 to expand maternal and infant care services.

On May 7th, the Florida Automobile Dealers Association formally recognized Frank's lasting impact by inducting him into its Hall of Fame alongside the leaders who have helped build an industry that generates more than one hundred billion dollars to Florida's economy and supports hundreds of thousands of jobs across our state.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Florida's 3rd Congressional District, I want to congratulate Frank DeLuca on this well-earned honor. His leadership and contributions to the community have made a meaningful impact on Marion County, and his legacy will last for generations to come.

HONORING MR. WILLIE JOINER FOR HIS HONORABLE MILITARY SERVICE AND LIFETIME OF PERSEVERANCE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 6, 2026

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Mr. Willie Joiner, a proud veteran of the United States Army, whose courageous service during the Vietnam War and lifelong perseverance embody the very best of the American spirit.

Mr. Joiner was drafted into the United States Army in 1968 and, following completion of basic training, answered our nation's call by serving a full tour of duty in the Vietnam War. He faithfully fulfilled his responsibilities with honor and distinction before receiving an honorable discharge in 1972. Like so many veterans of his generation, Mr. Joiner returned home carrying the unseen burdens of war while continuing to live a life marked by dignity, resilience, and quiet strength.

A resident of Dundee, Mississippi, Mr. Joiner's story began in Tunica County, where he was raised as one of fifteen children born to Frank, Sr. and Gennie V. Joiner. Growing up in a modest three-bedroom home on a plantation, the Joiner family faced many hardships. Without modern conveniences and with limited resources, Mr. Joiner worked alongside his parents and siblings as a sharecropper, helping provide for his family through hard work and determination.

Despite these humble beginnings, Mr. Joiner answered the call to defend the freedoms we cherish. His service reflects the sacrifices made by countless young Americans who left their homes to serve a nation they loved, often at great personal cost.

Today, Mr. Joiner continues to face serious medical challenges related to his military service. His courage in confronting these challenges serves as another testament to his enduring character. As a grateful nation, we owe our veterans not only our appreciation but also our unwavering commitment to ensuring they receive the care, support, and respect they have earned through their service.

Mr. Joiner's legacy also lives on through the enduring values of the Joiner family. In 2024, the family established The Joiner Place, a family heritage and learning center dedicated to preserving their history and inspiring future generations through the principles of faith, humility, service, generosity, forgiveness, and

thankfulness. Their mission reminds us that strong families and shared history strengthen our communities and our nation.

I also commend the efforts to preserve the Joiner family's legacy through the designation of Joiner Road in honor of Frank, Sr. and Gennie V. Joiner, recognizing the lasting contributions of a family whose story reflects the perseverance and resilience of rural Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, it is with profound respect and gratitude that I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Willie Joiner for his honorable military service, his steadfast commitment to family and country, and the example he continues to set for future generations. May we never forget his sacrifices, and may God continue to bless Mr. Willie Joiner, his family, our veterans, and the United States of America.

RECOGNIZING JUSTIN RAY GAETHJE, ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP LIGHTWEIGHT CHAMPION OF THE WORLD

HON. ABRAHAM J. HAMADEH

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 6, 2026

Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with tremendous pride as an Arizonan to honor one of our own—a warrior, a champion, and a true example of the American Dream: Justin Ray Gaethje, the undisputed Ultimate Fighting Championship Lightweight Champion of the World.

Born on November 14, 1988, Justin was raised in the hardworking town of Safford, Arizona. The son of a dedicated copper miner and his mother, Carolina, of Mexican descent from Sonora, he learned the values of discipline, sacrifice, and relentless grit from a young age. His father, John Ray Gaethje, worked for decades in the mines, and his mother instilled in him that same blue-collar work ethic that helped build Arizona and this Nation.

Justin started wrestling at age four. At Safford High School, he compiled a stellar 191–9 record, earned four state finals appearances, and brought home two Arizona state championships. That same toughness carried him through collegiate wrestling and into the world of professional Mixed Martial Arts. Known as "The Highlight," Justin has thrilled fans worldwide with his fearless, all-action style, devastating leg kicks, and unbreakable warrior spirit. He does not back down from anyone—he runs toward the fight. That is exactly the kind of courage and toughness Arizona produces.

Last month, Justin captured the undisputed UFC Lightweight Championship in historic fashion at UFC Freedom 250 on the White House lawn, defeating Ilia Topuria to become the first fighter to unify the title after holding the interim belt multiple times.

A kid from Safford, Arizona, now standing as the undisputed king of the lightweight division—that is the American Dream in action. Justin represents the best of Arizona and the best of America: resilience, family loyalty, hard work, and the refusal to quit. In a time when too many seek the easy path, Justin reminds us what real excellence looks like.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CIVIL WAR
DEFENSES OF WASHINGTON NA-
TIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 6, 2026

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park Act, which would recognize and preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington located in the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland. The Defenses of Washington, including forts, unarmed batteries and rifle trenches, created a ring of protection for the nation's capital during the Civil War.

This bill would redesignate the 22 Defenses of Washington currently under National Park Service jurisdiction as a national historical park, and allow other sites associated with the Defenses of Washington that are owned by D.C. or a unit of a state government to be affiliated with the national historical park through cooperative agreements. This bill would also require the Secretary of the Interior to facilitate the history of the Civil War, including the history of the Defenses of Washington and the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, being assembled, arrayed and conveyed for the benefit of the public for the knowledge, education and inspiration of this and future generations.

The Defenses of Washington were constructed at the beginning of the war as a ring of protection for the nation's capital and for President Abraham Lincoln. By the end of the war, the Defenses of Washington included 68 forts, 93 unarmed batteries, 807 mounted cannons, 13 miles of rifle trenches and 32 miles of military roads. The major test of the Defenses of Washington was the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, when Confederate Lieutenant General Jubal Early, directed by Confederate General Robert E. Lee, sought to attack the nation's capital from the north, causing Union forces threatening to attack Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, to be withdrawn. General Early was delayed by Union Major General Lew Wallace at the Battle of Monocacy on July 9, 1864, and was stopped at the northern edge of Washington at the Battle of Fort Stevens on July 11–12, 1864. The Shenandoah Valley Campaign ended when Union Lieutenant General Philip Sheridan defeated General Early at the Battle of Cedar Creek, Virginia on October 19, 1864.

Nearly all the individual forts in the Defenses of Washington—on both sides of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers—were involved in stopping General Early's attack, and the Battle of Fort Stevens was the second and last attempt by the Confederate Army to attack Washington.

Taken together, these battles were pivotal to the outcome of the war and the freedom and democracy that the war represented for this country. It is therefore fitting to recognize the Defenses of Washington by redesignating them as a national historical park.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING AMERICA'S 250TH
ANNIVERSARY IN MADISON
COUNTY

HON. EUGENE SIMON VINDMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 6, 2026

Mr. VINDMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate Madison County, Virginia, as our Nation commemorates the 250th anniversary of America's independence.

Madison County sits at the intersection of some of the most historically significant sites of American history critical to the foundation of our country. Chartered in 1772, its story stretches back more than 11,000 years, from the earliest Paleo-Indians to the colonial frontier and the founding of the Republic. Located near our Nation's Capital and the home to several Founding Fathers, Madison County shares a close connection to President James Madison, whose estate, Montpelier, is in neighboring Orange County. The county also witnessed pivotal moments in American history, including Civil War campaigns. In 1775 the Culpeper Minutemen, a well-known Revolutionary War militia of about 250 men organized from a broad district that included Culpeper, Orange, Fauquier, and what is now Madison County, reflecting the region's early role in Virginia's fight for independence.

Today, more than 13,000 people call Madison County home. Surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains, the county is known for its scenic beauty, local businesses, outdoor recreation, and communities that reflect the best of rural Virginia.

Madison County's history continues to be preserved by dedicated local organizations. The Madison County Historical Society operates the historic Kemper Residence and the Mountain Museum in Criglersville, where the Blue Ridge Heritage Project honors families who were forcibly displaced from the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Madison County African American Historical Association preserves and shares the county's Black history through its museum in the former Odd Fellows Lodge Hall, ensuring these important stories are remembered for generations to come.

As America celebrates its 250th anniversary, Madison County reminds us that our Nation's history was built by communities across the country and by generations of Americans whose hard work, sacrifice, and courage made our freedoms possible.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Madison County, Virginia, for its remarkable contributions to our Nation's history and in celebrating its role in this milestone anniversary of American independence.

RECOGNIZING THE TRENTON
TIGERS SOFTBALL TEAM

HON. KAT CAMMACK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 6, 2026

Mrs. CAMMACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary group of young women from Florida's 3rd Congressional District, the Trenton Tigers softball team, on capturing their third consecutive FHSA Rural State Championship.

This championship wasn't handed to them. It was earned through countless early mornings, late night practices, discipline, and a commitment to one another that defines what being a champion is all about.

The Trenton Tigers softball team has represented their school and Florida's 3rd District with grit, resilience, and determination. Through relentless work, unwavering discipline, and an unbreakable bond as teammates, they have shown that the heart of a champion isn't measured by the size of a school or a town, but by the determination to outwork and dominate every challenge placed before them.

I also want to give special recognition to Addison Allaire, who was recently named 2026 Florida Gatorade Player of the Year. This prestigious honor reflects her leadership, work ethic, and commitment to excellence in the classroom and on the field. Addison's accomplishments embody the very best of Florida student-athletes, and this recognition is well deserved.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Florida's 3rd Congressional District, I want to congratulate Addison and the Trenton Tigers softball team on another outstanding season. She has inspired young female athletes across our district by showing what hard work and heart can build. Go Tigers.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NO FENC-
ING AT LAFAYETTE SQUARE
ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 6, 2026

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the No Fencing at Lafayette Square Act, which would prohibit the installation of permanent fencing around Lafayette Square. This bill would help ensure that one of our nation's most important public spaces remains open and accessible to the public.

According to press reports, the Trump administration plans to install permanent fencing around Lafayette Square, a federal park next to the White House.

While I understand the importance of protecting the White House, which is already surrounded by a 13-foot-high fence, we can and must maintain our commitment to security without sacrificing public access by using the least restrictive means necessary to address security.

Lafayette Square has long welcomed First Amendment demonstrations, vigils and public gatherings. It serves as a place where Americans can peacefully assemble within sight of the White House and engage directly in a democratic tradition. The openness of Lafayette Square and our democracy is our strength, not a security weakness that needs to be fenced off. Permanent fencing at Lafayette Square would send the wrong message to the nation and the world by continuing to transform our democracy from one that is accessible and of the people to one that is exclusive and fearful of its own citizens.

Fencing is an incredibly imprecise security tool. It is more likely to keep out tourists, residents, students, and peaceful demonstrators than those determined to do harm. In many