

Ben holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from UCLA, a Master of Public Administration from Cal State Fullerton, and a certificate in Construction and Development Management from UC Irvine. At Cal State Fullerton, Ben served on the Advisory Board for the Master of Public Administration program and created the City Management Fellowship Program, which enables high-performing graduate students to learn directly from local city managers. In honor of his contributions to the profession, Ben received the Stewardship Award from the Municipal Management Association of Southern California.

In San Juan Capistrano, Ben led the city with a focus on fiscal management, eliminating the structural budget deficit and allowing the city to build surpluses and invest in public safety, parks, and critical infrastructure. Under his leadership, the city has improved its roadways, expanded affordable housing development, and revitalized downtown San Juan Capistrano. Several recreational and cultural amenities have been added, including the San Juan Capistrano Skatepark, Windmill Park, and the Northwest Open Space Park with Putuidem Village.

Ben Siegel's commitment to San Juan Capistrano has facilitated the prosperity that the community enjoys today. I recognize and celebrate his decade of leadership in San Juan Capistrano and wish Ben the best in his retirement and success in all his future endeavors.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SUSAN
LASCOLETTE

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2026

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the life of Susan Lascolette, a cherished member of our community. Susan was an extraordinarily dedicated individual who worked tirelessly and persistently to make her country, commonwealth, and Nation a better place.

Susan had an impressive career as a Senior Insurance Underwriter with notable firms such as Maryland Casualty, Security Insurance, and Markel; not to mention Susan's significant civic contributions, where she served as District No. 1 Supervisor for Goochland County from 2012 to 2024 and was past President of the Goochland Republican Women. Susan was also an active member of the Goochland Republican Committee and served as member of the State Central Committee of the Republican Party of Virginia from 2016 representing the 7th and 5th Districts.

Her devotion to service was not only evident in her professional life, but in her personal life as well. Susan was deeply involved in the community, volunteering whenever she could, helping support causes such as Meals on Wheels, Goochland Cares, and the Goochland Fire Auxiliary. Susan's kindness touched everyone she met, and she leaves behind a legacy full of compassion and devotion.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating Susan's incredible life. Our community is eternally grateful for everything she has done.

RECOGNIZING DR. ERHABOR
IGHODARO

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2026

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize and honor Dr. Erhabor Ighodaro, Ph.D. He is an accomplished educator, clergyman, public administrator and now, the first Nigerian American to serve as a Councilman for the city of Miami Gardens, which was incorporated on May 13, 2003. Dr. Ighodaro was appointed to serve as Councilman At-Large Seat 6, on September 12, 2012.

Dr. Ighodaro holds a Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from Nova Southeastern University, and he has had a profound impact upon education in South Florida. He is an educator with a solid background in public management, urban justice, urban education, curricula design and implementation of best practices methodologies, educational public policy and the intervention and resolution of school and community-based conflict.

As Executive Director of the Dr. Robert B. Ingram Foundation, Dr. Ighodaro oversees the organization's signature READ to LEAD program and has awarded over 5000 scholarships to students in Miami Dade County Public Schools. The scholarships entitle students to an educational excursion of Black history sites that culminates in one of Florida's major theme parks.

He also serves as the Miami-Dade School District's Administrator for the Ingram Africa School Alliance (IASA), "Rites of Passage" project and leads a delegation of students, teachers and parents on the district's annual excursion and student exchange opportunities with schools in Africa. Dr. Ighodaro is the author of the groundbreaking publication "Curriculum Violence: America's New Civil Rights Issue."

Dr. Ighodaro is the president of the Nigerian American Foundation and serves on numerous community boards and civic organizations. He is an Associate Minister at Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church. He is a mentor with the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project.

I am honored to recognize Dr. Erhabor Ighodaro for his unwavering dedication and commitment to education and to our community.

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL
REDEDICATION OF THE ASTORIA
COLUMN

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2026

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a landmark occasion in Oregon's 1st Congressional District, the centennial rededication of the Astoria Column.

This July, Oregonians from across the coast will gather to celebrate the 100th birthday of a monument that has been a beacon in Astoria since 1926. The centennial has spurred a remarkable effort to restore this observatory so the column will stand tall on Coxcomb Hill for another century and beyond.

Wrapped around the towering sides of the magnificent Column is a sweeping pictorial history of our region. These scenes, brought to life by architect Electus Litchfield and the masterful sgraffito painting technique of Attilio Pusterla, form a historical tapestry that is truly one of a kind.

Yet, the significance of this site extends beyond the Column itself. Just behind it rests a small granite marker that commemorates an invention born here on the Oregon coast: cable television. It is a quiet reminder that Astoria has always been a place where innovation meets history.

I recall visiting this very spot, at a time with gusty winds and torrential sideways rain, with Senator MERKLEY just before a town hall meeting. A little Oregon rain didn't stop us from climbing the spiral steps and gazing out at the City of Astoria and the Pacific Ocean.

This monument is a symbol of the Astorian spirit and the rededication a demonstration of the determination to protect the exceptional art and heritage for generations yet to come.

This day is possible because several decades ago Friends of the Astoria Column was created to preserve the column. Through decades, Friends of the Astoria Column have cared for this important structure, raising funds to complete cleaning and restoration, and even projecting a light show onto the column. In 1989 they actually scrubbed the column with toothbrushes to clean the facade.

It is truly an honor to represent Oregon's 1st Congressional District, and I am proud to stand with Astorians as they celebrate this beacon of our shared past.

RECOGNIZING THE HALL OF FAME
INDUCTION OF COLONEL JAMES
"JIM" CHALKLEY

HON. AARON BEAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2026

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel James "Jim" Chalkley, Retired, on his nomination and induction into the United States Army Transportation Corps Hall of Fame at Fort Lee, Virginia on July 27, 2026. The Transportation Corps Hall of Fame honors those whose careers exemplify the highest standards of service, leadership, and lasting contribution to Army operations. Few officers have had the breadth of impact, depth of experience, or the lasting influence that Colonel Chalkley has demonstrated throughout his career. Today, I'd like to honor his lifetime of service extending across several continents, conflicts and generations of soldiers.

Colonel Jim Chalkley's decorated career reflects over two decades of exceptional leadership and dedication to the United States Army. A graduate of the esteemed Virginia Military Institute, Jim embodies a lifelong commitment to professional education. Among other schooling, he earned his master's degree in Logistics Systems Management at Florida Institute of Technology and studied National Security and Strategic Studies at the U.S. Navy War College.

Over the course of his military service, Jim refined his expertise in transportation, deployment operations, personnel management and

strategic planning. He commanded transportation battalions, served assignments at the Pentagon, and held senior leadership positions throughout the United States and Europe. Among his most impactful assignments, Jim served as Deputy Commander of the 7th Transportation Group during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, helping lead one of the largest transportation and logistics efforts in modern Army history. During Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, he commanded the 6th Transportation Battalion where he instituted vital humanitarian relief operations. These assignments, in addition to his position as the Deputy Chief of Staff of the United States Army Europe, offer just a glimpse of a career defined by his exceptional service to our nation. His many awards and decorations, including the Legion of Merit Award and seven Meritorious Service Medals, reflect the high regard in which he is held. Jim was nominated for this honor by Colonel (Ret) Ed Fortunato, and he received endorsements from Major General (Ret) David A. Whaley and Lieutenant General (Ret) Dan Brown. But of course, he couldn't have achieved this success without the support of his wife of 53 years, Sharon.

As Colonel Chalkley is inducted into the United States Army Hall of Fame, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing his exemplary career and a legacy that will be felt throughout the United States Army for many years to come.

RECOGNIZING MT. OLIVETTE
MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2026

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary celebration of Mount Olivette Missionary Baptist Church, a historic landmark, in Miami, Florida.

The church was founded on October 12, 1912, in the home of Nathaniel Sampson, Reverend Sampson's brother, who is named as one of the pioneers, along with Julia Dean, Remalia Ellis, Richard Johnson, Francis Smith, Albert Taylor and Ellen Ward. Reverend Sampson's 16-year-old daughter Irene was the recording secretary.

The congregation later moved to Mrs. Powell's schoolhouse on Avenue G and Woods Street, which is now Northwest 1st Street and 2nd Avenue. The church bell would ring from a pine tree to alert the congregation about Sunday services, deaths and funerals.

Mount Olivette Missionary Baptist Church relocated to its present site at 1450 Northwest 1st Court around 1915.

In 1952, tragedy struck and the church had to be re-built from the ground-up. Under the leadership of Reverend I.C. Mickens the new sanctuary was completed in 1959, and the mortgage was burned in 1963.

Now, under the leadership of Reverend R. Clark, since 1979, Mt. Olivette Missionary Baptist Church continues to be a spiritual, educational and cultural center for the people and community it serves.

Please join me in recognizing this historic church, one of the corner stones of Miami's Overtown community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL
CAPITAL REVITALIZATION AND
SELF-GOVERNMENT IMPROVE-
MENT ACT OF 1997 TECHNICAL
CORRECTIONS ACT OF 2026

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2026

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 Technical Corrections Act of 2026, which would address several retirement issues for current and former District of Columbia employees that resulted from the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 (Revitalization Act). The Revitalization Act, among other things, transferred several categories of employees who were in the D.C. retirement system to the federal retirement system and transferred responsibility from D.C. to the federal government for funding pension benefits earned by D.C. teachers, police officers, firefighters and judges before 1997.

First, the Revitalization Act transferred several categories of employees, primarily related to D.C.'s criminal justice system, who participated in D.C.'s defined contribution plan from 1987 to 1997 to the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). However, these employees' service from 1987 to 1997 was not counted for purposes of creditable service or annuity amount in FERS. In 2009, Congress passed legislation counting this service for creditable service, but not annuity amount. This bill would allow these employees to buy into the FERS annuity amount for 1987 to 1997 by paying 1.3 percent of their base pay plus interest, essentially the employee contribution for this time, which would give them the full retirement benefit to which they should be entitled.

Second, this bill would address two benefit issues for employees in the D.C. teachers, police officers and firefighters pension plans, whose pre-1997 benefits are funded by the federal government. In 2018, D.C. enacted a law to provide domestic partner benefits for the police and firefighters pension plan, which mirrored a law already enacted for teachers. However, these domestic partner benefits apply only to service accrued after 1997, since the federal government funds pre-1997 benefits. This bill would make the domestic partner benefits available for pre-1997 benefits, too.

Finally, in 2012, D.C. enacted a law that reduced from 60 to 55 the age after which a surviving spouse can remarry without losing survivor benefits in the D.C. teachers, police and firefighters pension plans. However, these benefits apply only to service accrued after 1997, since the federal government funds pre-1997 benefits. This bill would bring those pre-1997 benefits in line with both the post-1997 benefits and the retirement benefits for federal employees in the Civil Service Retirement System and FERS and make an analogous change for D.C. judges, whose retirement benefits are funded by the federal government. In general, for federal retirees, 55 is the age after which a surviving spouse can remarry without losing survivor benefits.

This bill would give these workers the retirement benefits they deserve. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT
OF SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL LA-
CROSSE COACH JIM DAVIDSON

HON. THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2026

Mr. KEAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Coach Jim Davidson of Summit, New Jersey, upon his retirement from Summit High School men's lacrosse team.

Coach Davidson began his journey with Summit High School's lacrosse team in 1986 and became head coach in 1999. Drawing on his extensive athletic background in basketball and football, as well as his outstanding leadership capabilities, he transformed the program into a nationally recognized powerhouse. Throughout the past 27 years, Coach Davidson has led his team to 14 state titles, two Tournament of Champions crowns, and a remarkable 68-game winning streak, and most recently, a ranking as the top public school in the country for men's lacrosse.

While some may remember his tenure as the fourth most winningest men's lacrosse coach in state history, his true legacy lies in the foundation of what he built at Summit. Coach Davidson established a program rooted in repetition and structure. Preparation was exemplary and standards did not bend regardless of talent or age group. Coach Davidson played a pivotal role in growing and sustaining youth interest in the high school program, ensuring its lasting success.

By instilling discipline and fostering a culture of respect, he cultivated generations of dedicated student-athletes. While Coach Davidson's retirement marking the end of an era in New Jersey lacrosse, his influence extends beyond wins and losses. Coach Davidson is admired for his class, humility, and respect, earning recognition from coaches across the state for his significant contributions to the sport and his influence on countless young athletes.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Coach Jim Davidson's enduring impact and legacy, I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring him for his steadfast commitment to Summit High School men's lacrosse team.

HONORING AND PAYING TRIBUTE
TO MRS. ORA B. BENDROSS

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2026

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor one of South Florida's most beloved citizens, the late Mrs. Ora B. Bendross, who was affectionately known by many as "Nana."

Mrs. Bendross was known throughout the Miami-Dade County community as the lady with an enormous heart, who never ever met a stranger. Many in the South Florida community have experienced her kindness and generosity, and her home, became a refuge for some of today's most well-known community leaders. Those who knew her best will remember her open invitation to "stop by and have dinner with my family."