

Les Cousins Records and Books. He went on to publish a French-language 12-page weekly newspaper.

He was born December 15, 1924, in La Gonave, an island off mainland Haiti. Mr. Juste arrived in South Florida with his wife and children in 1973, after spending a few years in New York.

Please join me in honoring the late Viter Juste for his commitment, dedication and many years of distinguished service in Miami-Dade County.

HONORING THE AWARDEES OF THE ENGLISH EMPOWERMENT CENTER'S 64TH RECOGNITION CEREMONY

HON. JAMES R. WALKINSHAW

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 14, 2026

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the English Empowerment Center (EEC) and to honor the volunteers, instructors, students, community partners, and others who will be recognized at the 64th EEC Recognition Ceremony.

The mission of EEC is to teach adults the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English in order to empower them to participate more fully and confidently in their communities and in society as a whole. EEC serves low-literacy and limited English language proficient adults with a selection of low-cost, moderately intensive courses to help them transition into the workforce or other educational opportunities.

EEC provides the crucial first steps of language and literacy proficiency for workplace, citizenship, and community integration to help adults make measurable improvements in their lives. This past year, they have served over 2,000 adult learners with the help of over 600 volunteers who gave over 27,000 hours of service.

Each year EEC recognizes students and members of the community who have contributed their time, energy, and resources to achieving the mission of EEC. EEC will also award the prestigious Patricia M. Donnelly Merit Scholarship, and the inaugural Gerry E. Connolly Empowerment Award. I include in the RECORD the following names of the 2026 EEC honorees:

Community Partners: Amazon; Bailey's Crossroads/Culmore Place-Based Initiative; Dulmore United Methodist Church.

Volunteers of the Year: Chris Axarlis; Mary Pat Paris; Marie Tibor.

Student Speakers: Henry Herrera; Fatima Pena.

Patricia M. Donnelly Merit Scholarship Recipient: Patricia Ramirez Sejas.

Gerry E. Connolly Empowerment Award: John V. Thomas.

Also, I include in the RECORD the names of the volunteers who are celebrating service anniversaries with EEC.

Volunteer Service Anniversaries:

25 years: Jan Auerbach, and Susan Stillman.

20 years: Nancy Newman, and Naomi Witherspoon.

15 years: Banhi Bhattacharya, Michael Boito, and Janna Unterzuber.

10 years: Christopher Axarlis, Janet Barsy, Paul Cantrell, Elena Gonzalez, Diane Jensen,

William Nye, Susan Rose, Karen Rosenthal, Jean Samuel, Sharon Steen, and Gail Zimmerman.

5 years: Brian Brooks, Debby Chrisensen, Robin DeRosa, Leo Dillon, Lisa Esler, Teresa Fralish, Alan Kadrofske, Jill Martin, Mary Anne McDonald, Megann Mielke, Alana Morton, Emma Refuerzo, Elizabeth Stone, CK Tong, and Sari Warren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending the English Empowerment Center and in thanking and congratulating each of the honorees of the 64th EEC Recognition Ceremony. I wish all of them great success in their future endeavors.

POLICYMAKERS MUST PRIORITIZE MATERNAL HEALTH AND PRO- TECT MEDICAID

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 14, 2026

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that transcends politics because it is about life itself—protecting mothers, protecting babies, and protecting the healthcare that millions of American families rely on through Medicaid.

Medicaid is not an abstract government program. It is the foundation of maternal and child health in America. It finances more than 42 percent of all births nationwide, half of the births in rural communities, and approximately 60 percent of births to women of color. In Illinois alone, Medicaid covers more than 50 percent of the births in the state and insures approximately 3.4 million people, including nearly 1.5 million children.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that 5.7 million Americans will lose Medicaid coverage because of new policies that impose burdensome administrative requirements and unnecessary barriers to maintaining health insurance. These are not simply numbers; they represent pregnant mothers, newborn babies, working parents, seniors, and children who may lose access to essential medical care.

For Illinois, the consequences are especially severe. Our state is projected to lose approximately \$57 billion in federal Medicaid funding over the next decade, with estimates reaching approximately \$48 billion in direct Medicaid reductions. These losses will force hospitals and health care providers across our state to make impossible decisions, leading to workforce reductions, cuts to obstetric and mental health services, and even hospital closures.

The impact on maternal health cannot be overstated.

Medicaid guarantees coverage for low-income women throughout pregnancy and currently supports prenatal care, labor and delivery, and postpartum care. The damage of Medicaid cuts begins even before pregnancy. Women without health insurance are less likely to receive preventive care or treatment for chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, or substance use disorders before becoming pregnant, increasing the likelihood of pregnancy complications and poor birth outcomes.

Medicaid cuts will also devastate hospitals serving rural and underserved communities, thereby making labor and delivery more dangerous. More than 140 labor and delivery units are projected to close, forcing expectant moth-

ers to travel farther for care and increasing the risk of pregnancy complications. Already, labor and delivery units, women's health clinics, emergency departments, and birth centers have closed nationwide, leaving thousands of families without nearby maternal care.

Today, 48 States and the District of Columbia have extended postpartum Medicaid coverage to twelve months because policymakers on both sides of the aisle recognized a simple truth: childbirth does not end when a mother leaves the hospital. The first year after birth is one of the most medically-vulnerable periods in a woman's life. It is during this time that mothers receive treatment for postpartum depression, anxiety, hypertension, substance use disorder, and other potentially life-threatening complications. Research shows that Medicaid reimbursement for maternal health screenings significantly increases the detection, diagnosis, and treatment of postpartum mental health conditions. Weakening Medicaid threatens these life-saving services by shifting additional costs to states that may be forced to reduce postpartum coverage, eliminate doula services, home visiting programs, and integrated mental health care that have already demonstrated measurable success.

Perhaps nowhere are these dangers more apparent than in Black maternal health. Black women remain two to three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications than white women, while Black infants experience mortality rates twice as high as their white counterparts. These unacceptable disparities persist because structural inequities continue to limit access to quality care before, during, and after pregnancy. For communities like many of those I proudly represent in Chicago, these cuts will deepen existing disparities instead of addressing them. Policies that reduce access to care do not eliminate disparities, they widen them.

Congress should be strengthening maternal health, not dismantling it. Healthy mothers build healthy families, and healthy families build stronger communities. Every mother deserves a safe pregnancy, every baby deserves a healthy start, and every family deserves access to quality health care regardless of income or zip code.

I urge my colleagues to reject these harmful Medicaid cuts and to protect maternal health, expand postpartum care, reduce Black maternal health disparities, and ensure that every family has the opportunity to thrive. The health of our Nation begins with the health of our mothers.

HONORING PAMELA BURNETT

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 14, 2026

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to Pamela Burnett, a breast cancer survivor and the founder of The Beautiful Gate Cancer Support & Resource Center in Miami, Florida.

Ms. Burnett was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2002. In 2005, she started holding support group meetings out of her home for African-Americans battling cancer. A year later, in 2006, Ms. Burnett opened the doors to the Beautiful Gate Cancer Support & Resource

Center. Its mission is to provide African-Americans with the support they need to survive this illness. The center also services the community by increasing cancer awareness amongst African-Americans in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties.

Experts estimate that about one out of every eight women born today will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some time during her life. The strongest risk factor for breast cancer is age. A woman's risk of developing this disease increases as she gets older. However, thanks to improvements in cancer treatment and early detection, millions of women and thousands of men are surviving breast cancer today.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States, other than skin cancer. It is the second leading cause of cancer death in women, after lung cancer. The disease occurs almost entirely in women, but men can get it, too. There are more than 2.9 million breast cancer survivors in the United States.

I am honored to recognize Pamela Burnett, breast cancer survivor and founder of The Beautiful Gate Cancer Support & Resource Center, for her dedication and commitment to our community.

RECOGNIZING THE BOYS HIGH SCHOOL TRACK CHAMPIONS AS OHIO'S 13TH DISTRICT CHAMPION OF THE WEEK

HON. EMILIA STRONG SYKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 14, 2026

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize six extraordinary high school ath-

letes as Ohio's 13th Congressional District's Champions of the Week.

Last month, these young men demonstrated excellence, determination, and perseverance on Ohio's biggest high school track and field stage.

The Jackson High School boys 4x100-meter relay team, made up of Micah Regimbal, Preston Young, Jackson Baker, and Corey Jacobs, earned the title of state champion in the event and became their school's first boys track and field state champions.

Woodridge High School senior Ben LeBay earned an individual state title in the 1,600-meter run with a personal record of 4:13.5. Finally, Tallmadge High School senior Anthony Bontempo jumped to the top of the podium in the Division II high jump competition.

These young men have represented their schools, families, and communities with distinction. Their achievements remind us why Ohio's 13th Congressional District continues to be the "Birthplace of Champions."

I congratulate Micah, Preston, Jackson, Corey, Ben, and Anthony on their outstanding accomplishments and proudly recognize them as the Champions of the Week for Ohio's 13th Congressional District.

HONORING MS. RHODA OMEGA SHIRLEY

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 14, 2026

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, from the 24th District, of the great state of Florida, I rise today to recognize and honor one of South Florida's most respected educators, Ms. Rhoda Omega Shirley, who is retiring after

thirty-three years as a teacher and District Director with Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Ms. Shirley began her teaching career in 1980 as a full-time elementary school teacher. She also taught adult and secondary students part-time for eight years. Her love of teaching and fighting for educational opportunities for our children would catapult Ms. Shirley into leadership roles throughout her career. She has served as: Lead Education Specialist/Coordinator, Instructional Staffing Officer, District Supervisor Summer and Extended Year Programs, Director Area Center for Educational Enhancement (ACEE), Executive Director, and Director Summer Services/HIPPY.

Ms. Shirley believes that all communities are rooted in the values of their ancestors and cultures. She leads by example and her dedication to her profession and work with our children extends far beyond the classroom. As President of the Women's History Coalition, she fought to secure literature on the contributions of women for Miami-Dade County Public Schools and she helped to initiate a scholarship for young women from the Women's History Coalition. Ms. Shirley is also a member of the Florida Association of School Administrators and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

Ms. Shirley earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education from Florida Memorial College in 1980. She received her master's degree in Guidance and Counseling in 1989 from Barry University and attended Florida International University for her post graduate studies in Education Administration and Supervision.

Please join me in honoring Ms. Rhoda Omega Shirley for her commitment, dedication and service to our students and to her community.