

those who loved Declan in our prayers. Iowa will never forget his service or his sacrifice.

COMMEMORATING THE SENECA
NATION OF INDIANS AND THE
SIGNING OF THE 1842 BUFFALO
CREEK TREATY

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Seneca Nation of Indians as they commemorate the signing of the 1842 Buffalo Creek Treaty. Signed in a partnership agreement between the United States and the Seneca Nation of Indians, the Buffalo Creek Treaty ensured that the culture and heritage of the Seneca Nation remain on their rightful land in the Allegany and Cattaraugus Reservations.

Signed nearly 184 years ago in Western New York, the 1842 Buffalo Creek Treaty restored the Seneca Nation's possession of Cattaraugus and Allegany territories and reaffirmed the nation's right to self-govern and protect their land. Through unwavering unity and leadership, Seneca Nation leaders worked to ensure that the Indigenous population of Western New York was not displaced and that their culture and tradition survived and preserved. This treaty marked a defining moment in the preservation of Seneca sovereignty and identity. The dedication of the Seneca people to their heritage, community, and future ensures the well-being, prosperity, and sovereignty of future generations.

Today, as we commemorate 184 years since the signing of the Buffalo Creek Treaty, we look toward the future with hope and acknowledge the struggles and sacrifices of the past. The 1842 Buffalo Creek Treaty remains a lasting symbol of sovereignty, resilience, and cultural respect. As the Seneca people continue to strengthen their communities and protect their heritage, we recognize their enduring legacy of perseverance and leadership and celebrate their many contributions to Western New York and the United States.

HONORING ESTRELLITA "LITA"
REAL BUSTRIA

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Estrellita "Lita" Real Bustria as our Constituent of the Month for her outstanding volunteer work with the City of San Diego Bay Terraces Community & Senior Center.

Lita is an exceptional volunteer at the center, where she supports meal distribution for seniors, helps with information fairs, assists with the crafts booths, and hosts line dancing activities. As the President of the Bay Terraces Fil-Am Senior Association, she leads an organization of more than 400 members and ardently hosts weekly line dancing classes.

Even before the center was built in 2021, Lita was dancing with community members outdoors at the Bay Terraces Community

Park. Now, she leads, teaches, and choreographs line dancing classes, both for recreation and special performance events around the community.

Lita first came to the United States in 1970 to join her late grandfather in San Francisco. Her childhood sweetheart John Bustria, Jr., joined the U.S. Navy and immigrated to the United States, where Lita and John married in 1972. They left their hometown of Dasol, Pangasinan, Philippines, to make a life in America. They lived in Virginia, Washington, Florida, and finally settled in San Diego, where they raised their son and daughter.

While John served in the military and Lita worked as a government contractor, they picked up ballroom dancing skills, and learned tango, cha cha, swing, bachata and more. They attended ballroom dance classes at Southwestern College, but also had friends teach them more dance techniques in their own home. Lita has been dancing routinely with community members at Bay Terraces Community Park for more than two decades.

Today, Lita continues to bring seniors together to stay active and healthy. She volunteers with grace and passion, and I am honored to recognize her.

RECOGNIZING THE OUTDOOR LAB
FOUNDATION

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Outdoor Lab Foundation on the 50th anniversary of their Windy Peaks Campus.

For over 60 years, the Outdoor Lab has touched the lives of young people in Jefferson County by providing a week-long camp experience that helps middle and high school students build leadership, communication, and teamwork skills. Beyond this, the Outdoor Lab has helped generations of Jefferson County students develop a lasting appreciation for Colorado's natural spaces.

At both their Mount Blue Sky campus in Evergreen and Windy Peak campus in Bailey, the Outdoor Lab Foundation welcomes over 5,000 students each year. As a proud Outdoor Lab alumna and former high school student leader myself, I can personally attest to the importance of their work. I thank them for investing in our children and in access to the outdoor spaces that are such an important part of our Colorado way of life.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate the Outdoor Lab Foundation on 50 years of outdoors education at their Windy Peak campus and wish them continued success in the future.

RECOGNIZING THE LIBRE
INITIATIVE

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize The LIBRE Initiative on the auspicious occasion of its 15th Anniversary. For a decade and a half, LIBRE has worked tirelessly to advance economic freedom and opportunity for Hispanic communities across Pennsylvania and the Nation.

Founded in 2011, The LIBRE Initiative has grown into one of the most active grassroots organizations serving Hispanic families, small business owners, and entrepreneurs. Through community outreach, civic education, and direct engagement with elected officials, LIBRE has helped countless individuals navigate the path toward greater economic self-sufficiency.

Over the years, LIBRE has expanded its work to include English-language classes, financial literacy workshops, job fairs, and back-to-school drives to support working individuals and families.

This milestone anniversary reflects 15 years of selfless and tireless dedication to empowering individuals to pursue their own version of the American Dream—free from unnecessary government barriers.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored and privileged to recognize The LIBRE Initiative, commend its 15 years of service to Hispanic communities in Pennsylvania and across our Nation, and look forward to witnessing the positive and meaningful results of its tireless and dedicated work for decades to come.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF
PRINCIPAL NAN M. WOOD

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the late Principal Mrs. Nan M. Wood, a woman whose influence can be seen and felt throughout our community by students, colleagues, and community members.

Throughout her life, she inspired others with her strength, compassion, and love of education, and cherished every moment shared with her family and students. Her greatest joy was her role as a devoted wife to her husband, the late Mr. John David Wood. Together, the loving couple were proud parents to Reverend J. Darryl Wood, Lauren Ducceschi, the late Dennis Wood, Minister Linda Parker, and the late Laina Kennedy. She later was blessed to become a grandmother, nurturing her grandchildren with the same kindness and care she gave to everyone in her life.

Mrs. Wood was born on August 26, 1929, in Buffalo, New York, to Mr. Belton McCarley and Mrs. Mabel McCarley. She was raised with the strong support of her family from the very beginning, helping to shape her into a natural leader in all aspects of her life. She excelled academically, attending Buffalo Public Schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade, and going on to earn her Bachelor's in Elementary Education from SUNY Buffalo State. Following her graduation, Mrs. Wood began a nearly three-decade career in education, teaching elementary students throughout Buffalo Public Schools before transitioning to the role of Assistant Principal at Fillmore Middle School, and later to Principal at Buffalo Public Community School No. 53 in 1972.

Community School No. 53 was the first Buffalo Public School to be under the leadership

of an African American woman. Principal Wood began a transformative period of leadership focused on academic excellence, student enrichment, cultural exposure, and community engagement. Throughout the following two decades, she expanded educational opportunities by creating student travel, cultural and academic experiences across the United States, Canada, and Europe, while also advocating for additional school and community resources. Her commitment to students and families led to the establishment of community-serving programs and facilities, including a Home Economics Laboratory. By 1987, under her visionary leadership, enrollment at Community School No. 53 had grown to approximately twelve hundred students, making it the largest elementary school in the City of Buffalo at that time.

Over the years, Principal Wood received numerous awards and accolades in recognition of her outstanding service and commitment to education, including the P.U.S.H. for Excellence Award, the Black Educators Association Educator of the Year Award, the RIT Distinguished Teacher Recognition Program Award, and the United Voices of St. John Distinguished Service Award. In addition to her educational honors, Principal Wood and her daughter, Lauren, were the first mother-daughter pair to serve as principals in Buffalo Public School history. Although Principal Wood retired from Buffalo Public Schools in 1987, she continued to carry forward her love of education, establishing the Belton and Mabel McCarley College Scholarship Program to support and encourage students across the community.

Principal Wood was a faithful member of St. John Baptist Church, contributing her time and talents by serving as the Sunday School teacher, and narrating the United Voices of St. John's Sunday night musicals and community concerts. In her time of leisure, Principal Wood found joy in life's simple pleasures—traveling across the globe, reading to her grandchildren, and cooking for her loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, Principal Nan M. Wood lived a life of devotion to her family, community, students, and faith. Her unwavering commitment to those she loved and her compassion towards others had a profound impact on all who knew her. Principal Wood was a woman who believed in the importance of equitable education, family, and faith above all else and worked tirelessly to support those around her. Her kindness, loyalty, and warmth will forever be remembered. Let us continue to honor her legacy by carrying forward the values she lived by: faith, education, and above all, love.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JEANNE GIBSON

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Jeanne Gibson. Jeanne's life and legacy are immeasurable. Jeanne, a real life "Rosie the Riveter," inspired generations of women across our country through her example of service, determination, and patriotism.

Jeanne grew up in Minnesota before moving to Seattle in 1944. She entered a shipyard

world of heavy steel, protective face shields, and the afternoon-to-night swing shift at the height of World War II. She was one of the more than six million American women who answered the call on the home front as a "Rosie" during the war. Jeanne later reflected that the work felt exhilarating, but its urgency made it seem ordinary to the people doing it.

After the war, Jeanne moved to California, which she called home for the rest of her life. She earned an undergraduate degree, a master's degree, and a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of California, Berkeley. Across a 30-year teaching career, Jeanne touched the lives of thousands of students, always focused on supporting and uplifting younger generations.

In 2024, she and her fellow Rosies were collectively awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of their extraordinary contributions to our Nation. I had the privilege of meeting Jeanne several times over the years, and every accolade she received was well deserved. She was a pioneer, an advocate, and a true patriot.

Even in her later years, Jeanne remained a tireless champion for preserving the legacy of the Rosies. She volunteered at Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park on "Rosie Fridays," sharing the stories of the women whose work helped win World War II and ensuring their legacy would inspire future generations.

Just days before her passing, Jeanne was honored with a Wall of Honor banner at the park she loved so dearly and recognized during a San Jose Earthquakes halftime ceremony celebrating Bay Area heroes. It was a fitting tribute to Jeanne, a woman whose life was defined by selfless service, strength and grace.

On behalf of California's 8th Congressional District, I extend my heartfelt condolences to Jeanne's family and to all those whose lives she touched. I thank Jeanne for her service, her leadership, and her unwavering commitment to preserving the legacy of the "Rosies." Her story will continue to inspire generations to come and she will never be forgotten.

HONORING FRANK P. RUFFINO

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Frank P. Ruffino, who has dedicated more than four decades of service to the State of California and demonstrated a lifelong commitment to the betterment of the community.

Throughout his distinguished career, Mr. Ruffino has served the public as the Pensions and Benefits Director for the California State Treasurer's Office and the State Treasurer Designee for two of our Nation's largest public pension systems, the California Public Employees' Retirement System and the California State Teachers' Retirement System. In these roles, Mr. Ruffino provided critical guidance on pension, retirement, and benefits policy.

Mr. Ruffino has held leadership positions across multiple departments at the state level, including the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the California Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Ruffino also served as a gubernatorial and legislative appointee, including appointment and reappointment by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. to the California Board of Chiropractic Examiners and appointment by the California State Senate to the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists, where he contributed thoughtful leadership and governance oversight.

Additionally, Mr. Ruffino has demonstrated strong leadership within labor and professional organizations, including service as President and CEO of the Association of California State Supervisors and in leadership roles with the California State Employees Association.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Mr. Ruffino has maintained a lifetime commitment to civic engagement and volunteer service. He has supported community organizations, youth programs, and local initiatives, and has been recognized with the Presidential Volunteer Service Award.

I am proud to recognize and honor Frank P. Ruffino for his exemplary public service, leadership, civic engagement, and enduring dedication to the community.

RECOGNIZING THE REFUGE CAFE

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate The Refuge Cafe on the 20th anniversary of their supportive housing community in Broomfield.

For over two decades, The Refuge Cafe has uplifted vulnerable community-members who were struggling with substance use disorder, homelessness, and mental health. It first opened its doors in 2006 and today serves an estimated 1,000 community members every month. Their holistic work is a cornerstone of the Broomfield community, providing a safe place to rest, access to local resources, free lunches, Wi-Fi, showers, and hygiene supplies for our friends and neighbors in need. The Refuge is dedicated to serving individuals in the community by providing access to resources and offering a sense of belonging.

Having grown up as an at-risk youth, I know that healthcare is more than just access to services and economic stability—it is also about human connection. The Refuge intentionally cultivates this human connection in their community, fostering trauma-informed care that facilitates lasting recovery.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate The Refuge Cafe on celebrating 20 years of "holding hope and building dreams," as they continue to deliver integrated healthcare services to our community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MRS. "MOTHER" BESSIE QUINNIE

HON. TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of "Mother" Bessie