

service, he earned the trust of the department, city leadership, and most importantly, the people of North Texas.

I congratulate Chief Justin Ball on his well-deserved new role. His leadership and commitment to keeping our communities safe is appreciated by Texas-24 and all of North Texas.

HONORING BEACON LIGHT
BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute a vibrant congregation in my district, Beacon Light Baptist Church of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and to recognize the ministry of its pastor, Eric A. Williams, on behalf of the people of East Baton Rouge Parish.

Pastor Williams attended Delgado Community College and Southern University at New Orleans, where he majored in Business Management. God allowed him to be one of the first of many instructors at the Darryl S. Brister College and Theological Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana.

In 1995, Pastor Williams humbly submitted to the call of God for his life, under the leadership of his pastor, Bishop Darryl S. Brister, Apostle and Overseer of Beacon Light International Ministries. He was licensed to preach the Gospel in 1996, and on January 31, 1997, he was ordained as Elder.

On April 29, 2007, a historical transition occurred for the Family of Light, when Elder Eric A. Williams and Lady Iris J. Williams were installed as Pastor and First Lady of Beacon Light Baptist Church of Baton Rouge. Under Pastor Williams' leadership, Beacon Light has undoubtedly become a true beacon of light in the Baton Rouge community.

Intercessory Prayer, Light of Praise Dance Ministry, Greeters and Ushers Ministry, Media Ministry, Homework Assistance Program, Frontline Warriors Men's Ministry, Jewels of Light Pre-teen and Teen Female Ministry, School Mentoring Program, Evangelism, Hospitality, Healing and Recovery, Parking Lot, Marriage Ministry, and New Members Ministry are just a few of the ministries and programs initiated since Pastor Williams' assignment began at Beacon Light of Baton Rouge.

As a result of his being instrumental in the works of God Almighty, the membership of Beacon Light of Baton Rouge has flourished from several hundreds to several thousands within a short number of years. His congregation describes his life as a living testimony, and calls him a living miracle.

Pastor Williams is an exceptional leader in ministry, as well as in the Baton Rouge community. He gives in many capacities as it relates to people and the community. He is truly a spiritual father and guide to many members and non-members alike, and his members describe him as the most down-to-earth person and the best pastor on this side of Heaven.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Beacon Light Baptist Church of Baton Rouge for its years of faithful service, and in wishing its pastor and congregation God's continued favor in the years ahead.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, on September 1, 2026, I missed a recorded vote. Had I been present, I would have voted No on Roll Call No. 291, the Northeast Lobsterman Protection Act of 2026.

HONORING JUDGE STEPHEN KOURI
ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Honorable Stephen Kouri on his retirement after nearly 24 years of distinguished service as a judge on Illinois' Tenth Judicial Circuit.

Judge Kouri has dedicated more than three decades to serving Peoria and Central Illinois. A graduate of Spalding Institute and the University of Illinois College of Law, he practiced law for 20 years before being elected to the Tenth Judicial Circuit in 2002.

During his time on the bench, Judge Kouri served communities throughout Peoria, Marshall, Putnam, Stark, and Tazewell Counties and was the Circuit's longest-serving judge at the time of his retirement. Throughout his career, he earned a reputation for his fairness, sound judgment, professionalism, and strong work ethic.

Judge Kouri's commitment to public service extends well beyond the courtroom. He served on the Peoria City Council from 1993 to 1997 and has held numerous leadership roles with civic, charitable, and Catholic organizations throughout the Peoria area. He also played an instrumental role in bringing the IHSA boys basketball state finals to Peoria and helped establish "Access the Experience," which provided young people with disabilities the opportunity to participate in state finals activities.

I congratulate Judge Kouri on his retirement, thank him for his many years of service to Central Illinois, and wish him and his family all the best in this next chapter.

RECOGNIZING DOMINICK BRETON

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Dominick Breton of Wheat Ridge for his impactful contribution to small businesses and the community of Wheat Ridge. Leaving behind a legacy of kindness, Mr. Breton passed away on June 18, 2026.

Fondly known as "Mr. Wheat Ridge," Dominick was a beloved contributor to our community, participating in events, service projects, and business advocacy. Dominick served as president of the Wheat Ridge Chamber of Commerce for over seven years and was a member of Kiwanis for nine years.

Dominick had an inspirational gift to mobilize his neighbors and community members to help with projects or initiatives to benefit the community. Through his dedication, he made a deeply positive impact on our community.

During his final months, Dominick persevered through his work with the same strength and passion. Though he will be missed, his legacy of service lives on in the many lives he touched.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to recognize Dominick Breton for his impact and thank him for his contribution to the Wheat Ridge community and beyond. We will remember him fondly as Wheat Ridge carries on his mission.

HONOR TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO
DR. BRAD HUNT

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Dr. Brad Hunt. After 35 years in public education, including eight years as Superintendent of Coppell ISD, Dr. Brad Hunt is set to retire at the end of the school year. Starting as a teacher at Coppell High School in 1990, he went on to serve as principal and then superintendent. His leadership has helped shape Coppell ISD into one of the most respected school districts in Texas.

Dr. Hunt has inspired generations of students, supported countless educators, and left a lasting mark on every campus in the district. His dedication to student success and his vision for excellence have touched thousands of lives, and his impact will be felt for years to come.

I thank Dr. Hunt, for his incredible service, his belief in our North Texas students, and his commitment to Coppell. We wish him the very best in his next chapter.

HONORING ANTIOCH FULL GOSPEL
BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a resilient congregation in my district, Antioch Full Gospel Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, as it commemorates eighty-five years of faith, perseverance, and service to our community.

Antioch Baptist Church was established in the year of 1941. The church started with four members in a society hall under the leadership of Reverend Ed Smith. Its first church was built in 1942. The church purchased property for sixteen hundred dollars in 1961 and built its second church in 1962. The founding pastors that paved the way for Antioch to be such a strong church, and for it to still be standing today, are Reverend Ed Smith, Reverend Willie Smith, Reverend Leonard Smith, Reverend E. B. Robertson, Bishop Eugene Harris, Reverend Robert Gross, and Pastor George Spears.

Through God's divine plan and purpose, Pastor Gregory Cooper, Sr., was sent to Antioch as pastor in April 1991. In September of that same year he was officially installed as Pastor of Antioch Baptist Church. Under his firm yet gentle leadership the congregation completed and was able to march into its new sanctuary that year. By the power of God and faithful and committed members, the third church was paid off in 1997. Antioch Baptist Church became Antioch Full Gospel Baptist Church in April of 2005.

Today the congregation stands strong, a thriving body of men, women, and children that have come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord. To God be the glory for the things He has done, and for using Bishop Gregory Cooper, Sr., to lead them into the promises, as God shows Himself strong and mighty in the lives of the believers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Antioch Full Gospel Baptist Church for eighty-five years of faithful service, and in wishing its pastor and congregation every blessing in the years to come.

**HONORING STEVE KWARCANY ON
BEING NAMED THE 2026 UPPER
PENINSULA VETERAN OF THE
YEAR**

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and recognize Retired Air Force Master Sergeant Steve Kwarcany on being named the 2026 Upper Peninsula Veteran of the Year. For more than a decade, Steve has been a steadfast leader within numerous Veteran organizations across the Upper Peninsula, dedicating countless hours to improving the lives of those who have served our Nation.

As a Life Member of VFW Hiawatha Post 2998, AMVETS Escanaba Post 123, DAV Delta County Chapter 24, and Bark River American Legion Post 438, Steve has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to serving his fellow Veterans. His leadership roles as Commander of the Delta County Veterans Council, Quartermaster of VFW Post 2998, Senior Vice Commander of DAV Chapter 24, and Chairman of the Delta County Department of Veterans Affairs Board reflect the confidence and respect he has earned from his fellow Veterans.

Steve played a vital role in the ballot referendum that established the Delta County Department of Veterans Affairs, helping ensure that local Veterans have greater access to the resources and services they deserve. His service as Director of the Delta County Veterans Council's Memorial Day, POW/MIA Recognition Day, and Veterans Day ceremonies, along with his work as Funeral Honor Guard Commander and member of the Upper Peninsula Honor Flight Welcome Home Honor Guard, demonstrates his enduring commitment to honoring those who have worn the uniform.

Steve's work has left an enduring mark on the Upper Peninsula. Whether coordinating the annual VFW Poppy Sale, serving as a mentor for young people while at the Bark River-Harris Leo Club, or volunteering with the

U.P. Off Road Races, Steve has consistently placed service above self. By exemplifying the highest standards of leadership, he has inspired countless others to embrace the values of citizenship, volunteerism, and patriotism.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Retired Air Force Master Sergeant Steve Kwarcany on being named the 2026 Upper Peninsula Veteran of the Year. On behalf of Michigan's 1st Congressional District, I congratulate Steve on this well-deserved recognition and thank him for his extraordinary service to our Nation, our Veterans, and the people of the Upper Peninsula.

**RECOGNIZING THE BRIGHT START
INITIATIVE**

HON. MARILYN STRICKLAND

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Bright Start Initiative and its founders, Michael and Marcus Kang. The Bright Start Initiative was founded by two brothers who saw firsthand that oral-health education and basic supplies were not reaching every family equally.

The Bright Start Initiative is a student-founded 501(c)(3) nonprofit bringing free dental supplies and multilingual oral-health education to underserved students across the United States. Student-led teams partner with schools and dental professionals to deliver supplies and lessons families can actually use, in the languages they already speak at home.

One in five children in the United States lives with untreated tooth decay, and it is the number one chronic illness among children. The Bright Start Initiative is prepared to support over 5,000 students, with lessons translated into over 18 languages, and have partnered with 100 schools in six states.

Michael and Marcus Kang are leaders in Washington State and in the country. I applaud Michael and Marcus's championship of their fellow students and look forward to all that they will accomplish in the future.

RECOGNIZING DONNA WALKER

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jefferson County Public Library Director Donna Walker on her retirement after 14 years of service. Donna's tenure is best characterized by her commitment to making library services more accessible to all patrons.

Under Donna's transformational leadership, underserved communities saw expanded library services, including greater access for Spanish-speaking residents as she championed the hiring of bilingual employees. Donna strongly supported library services in rural communities by working on plans to develop three new campuses in our remote neighborhoods.

Thanks to Donna's outstanding work, Jefferson County became home to our Nation's first

staffless library, which provides residents with access to books, office supplies, and other library resources.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Donna Walker on her retirement and thank her for her commitment to serving our community.

**HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN
HERO CASON WALLACE**

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Cason Wallace. Cason, a Dallas native and Richardson High School alumni, recently helped lead the Oklahoma Thunder to a NBA Championship. In the Game 7 victory, he contributed 10 points and 3 steals in 26 minutes played. His championship win is not just a personal victory, but a proud moment for the entire community that have watched him play in Richardson throughout the years.

From the beginning of his athletic career at Richardson High School to his collegiate success at the University of Kentucky, and now a world champion on the NBA stage, his roots in North Texas remain strong, continuing to inspire young athletes across our community.

I thank Cason for showing us what it means to lead with heart and hustle. Cason has given North Texas something unforgettable to celebrate, and we look forward to watching his NBA career continue.

**HONORING MOUNT CARMEL
BAPTIST CHURCH**

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a faithful congregation in my District, Mount Carmel Baptist Church of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, as it marks more than seventy-five years of worship, education, and service to the people of East Baton Rouge Parish.

Mount Carmel Baptist Church of Baton Rouge was founded in 1949, when a group of Christian men and women met on North 32nd Street to establish a new congregation. On September 21, 1949, the members adopted the name Mount Carmel Baptist Church No. 2, and Reverend Herbert Burden was elected as the church's first pastor. The congregation worked together to construct its first church building, where services began in December 1949 while construction continued. The church was formally incorporated in 1972 as Mount Carmel Baptist Church of Baton Rouge.

Throughout its history, Mount Carmel has emphasized spiritual growth, youth development, education, and service to the community. In 2001, the congregation relocated from North 37th Street to its current location on Prescott Road, bringing its ministries and commitment to community service to a new neighborhood. The church continues to build upon the legacy of its founders through worship,