

Since 2011, Steve has played a pivotal role in shaping the economic future of Wheat Ridge, serving as both the Economic Development Manager and the Executive Director of the Urban Renewal Authority. Since his first major project, which brought a Sprouts Farmers Market to the area, Steve has worked tirelessly to build strong partnerships with businesses, developers, and community leaders. His commitment to redevelopment and his talent for attracting new investment have helped guide Wheat Ridge into a new chapter of economic vitality.

Thanks in large part to Steve's efforts, Wheat Ridge has grown into a thriving, sustainable suburban community with accessible public transportation, vibrant businesses, and improved amenities for residents. Steve's legacy will be represented in his final major project, the Clear Creek Crossing, which will bring new opportunities and continued growth to Wheat Ridge for years to come.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Steve Art on his outstanding service and wish him all the best in his well-earned retirement.

**HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN
HERO ASHLEA QUINONEZ**

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, Ashlea Quinonez. Ashlea is a North Texas native and accomplished leader with an impressive career in politics, government, and healthcare. She was recently appointed as Regional Administrator for Region VI of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. In this role, she will be based out of Fort Worth, and represent Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Arkansas.

Ashlea's interest in politics began when she was just seven years old when she helped stuff envelopes with campaign letters for a family friend that was seeking county office. A graduate of Texas A&M with a B.S. in Political Science, she went to work for former Senator Phil Gramm. Her career has led her to working for a North Texas political party, running a district office for a member of Congress, and working in government relations for the Memorial Hermann Health System. Through her service on numerous boards and task forces across Texas, Ashlea has left a lasting impact on our communities across the state.

I congratulate Ashlea on her new role and thank her for her continued commitment to serving others in North Texas and across the country.

**HONORING SHILOH MISSIONARY
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 distinguished church in my District,

Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, which has served this community for more than 150 years, with a history rooted in faith, service, education, and community advancement.

The church was organized in 1872 by Reverend George Byrd, with its first house of worship located on Boyd Avenue in the Spanish Town area of Baton Rouge. Reverend Byrd faithfully served as Shiloh's first pastor for thirty-four years.

Following Reverend Byrd's retirement in 1906, Reverend Jack Mitchell became Shiloh's second pastor. During his pastorate, the church moved from its original Boyd Avenue location to 14th Street. As the congregation continued to establish itself in the community, the existing church structure was demolished in 1932 and replaced with a new building on South 14th Street.

As Reverend Mitchell advanced in age, Dudley T. Smith was ordained to the Gospel ministry at his request and served as his assistant. After Reverend Mitchell's retirement, Reverend Dudley T. Smith succeeded him as pastor in 1944, continuing Shiloh's legacy of spiritual leadership and service.

Following the death of Reverend Dudley T. Smith in February 1962, the congregation elected his youngest son, Reverend Charles T. Smith, as pastor in April of that year. His fifty-year pastorate would become a significant period of growth and development in Shiloh's history.

Beginning in the 1970s, Shiloh undertook a major expansion of its physical and educational presence. Between 1972 and 1980, the church constructed its present sanctuary and first educational building on South 13th Street at a total cost of approximately seven hundred thousand dollars, including the land. Demonstrating the congregation's commitment and stewardship, the debt was retired in 1988, seven years ahead of schedule.

Shiloh's commitment to education took another important step forward in 1975 with the establishment of a scholarship program for church members under the leadership of Reverend Charles T. Smith. What began as an investment in the educational aspirations of Shiloh members grew into a program that, according to the church's history, awards more than sixty-five thousand dollars annually.

The church campus continued to grow in 1997 with the completion of a new social, educational, fellowship, and office complex. The one-and-a-half-million-dollar facility included eighteen classrooms, five offices, a library, and a greatly enlarged gymnasium, further expanding Shiloh's capacity for Christian education, fellowship, administration, and community ministry. The debt incurred for the project was retired in 2007.

That same year, Shiloh expanded its charitable reach through the creation of Shiloh's Charitable Foundation, Incorporated. Established in 2007, the Foundation provided another avenue through which the church could address community needs, with areas of focus that include education, economic development, and social services.

After fifty years of pastoral leadership, Reverend Charles T. Smith retired in 2012 and passed away in September of that year. In February 2013, the congregation elected Reverend Fred Jeff Smith as Shiloh's fifth pastor, continuing a pastoral legacy that had extended through his father and grandfather.

Today, Shiloh has grown from the congregation established on Boyd Avenue in 1872 into a church with more than three thousand members and over fifty employees. Throughout generations of pastoral leadership, physical expansion, educational investment, and community outreach, Shiloh has remained committed to its mission as a holistic ministry, to grow, teach, and help others come to know the Shalom, or peace, of God.

From its beginnings in Spanish Town to its present ministry in Baton Rouge, the history of Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church reflects more than the growth of a congregation. It is a story of faith passed from generation to generation, investment in education and community, responsible stewardship, and an enduring commitment to serving the whole person and the whole community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church for more than 150 years of faithful service, and in wishing its pastor and congregation many more years of blessings and growth.

RECOGNIZING CALIFORNIA ENERGY, POWER, AND INNOVATION COLLABORATIVE (CAL EPIC)

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the California Energy, Power, and Innovation Collaborative, or Cal EPIC, for its significant contributions to advance the region's zero-carbon goals, strengthen the local workforce, and establish the Greater Sacramento area as a national hub for clean mobility innovation.

In 2019, four distinguished regional institutions: the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, the Greater Sacramento Economic Council, Sacramento State University, and the University of California, Davis, came together to establish the California Mobility Center, now known as Cal EPIC, with a bold and forward looking vision to strengthen the clean energy workforce, foster innovation, and position the Sacramento region as a leader in the clean energy economy.

Cal EPIC has reached another significant milestone with the opening of its Innovation Hub. This 33,000-square-foot research, development, manufacturing, and workforce accelerator brings together cutting-edge technology, hands-on training, and industry collaboration under one roof. The Hub includes dedicated office, classroom, and meeting space; 5,000 square feet for EV technician training in partnership with Rivian Automotive; a 3,500-square-foot manufacturing and prototyping lab; and the 10,000-square-foot Capital Charge Yard, a \$4 million EV charger testing center funded by the California Energy Commission. Through interoperability testing, vehicle-to-grid experimentation, and workforce development, the Innovation Hub is creating new opportunities for innovation, preparing workers for the clean-energy economy, and helping position Greater Sacramento at the forefront of the Nation's transition to clean transportation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the California Energy, Power,

and Innovation Collaborative for its leadership and commitment to build a stronger, more innovative, and prosperous clean energy economy in the Sacramento region.

RECOGNIZING RECOVERYWORKS

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate RecoveryWorks on its 5th anniversary.

Since opening in 2021 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, RecoveryWorks has served as a reliable safe place for the unhoused community in Colorado. RecoveryWorks offers comprehensive services for those in need, including mental health support, addiction recovery programs, and job placement assistance, as well as respite care and hygiene facilities. Originally founded as a low-barrier emergency day shelter, RecoveryWorks has since evolved. They have relocated to the Mountain View Flats, which now serves as the site for their Bridge Housing program and through this new facility, they offer 34 units of immediate, short-term housing.

Having grown up as an at-risk youth, I understand firsthand that access to resources and a strong support system are foundational to achieving success. This is precisely what RecoveryWorks offers to so many individuals. RecoveryWorks brings dignity, hope, and stability to people during some of the most difficult moments in their lives. They have had and will continue to have a lasting impact on the entire community.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate RecoveryWorks on celebrating their 5th anniversary and thank them for their service to our community.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO HERSTORY GALLERY

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, HerStory Gallery. As wildfires continue to displace families and destroy homes in California, the need for aid is greater than ever. HerStory Gallery, a North Texas store dedicated to empowering and uplifting women, has stepped up in an incredible way. Their latest initiative embodies the spirit of compassion and service—organizing donation drops in HerStory locations across our community to support those affected by the devastating fires.

Joining forces with Revell with a Cause, Giving Generously, and the L.A. Dream Center, HerStory cleared floor space at their galleries in Dallas and Fort Worth to make room for donations and rallied our community to provide essential supplies such as non-perishable food, clothing, hygiene products, and emergency relief items for those impacted. Their efforts remind us that, even from miles

away, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of those in crisis.

I thank HerStory Gallery for leading with heart and showing what it truly means to serve others through their generosity and compassion.

HONORING MCKOWEN BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor McKowen Baptist Church, a cornerstone of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, since its founding in 1910. For over a century, McKowen Baptist has exemplified unwavering faith, service, and leadership throughout the community. Guided by Reverend Gerard Robinson's steadfast hand, the church has flourished, nurturing its congregation and expanding its outreach with compassion and purpose.

In 1910, a devoted group of Christians, members of McKowen Baptist Church Number 1 in West Feliciana Parish, found themselves in Baton Rouge without a church home. Led by Rev. John Davis, they gathered at Brother Israel Davis's home to lay the foundation for McKowen Baptist Church Number 2. As their numbers grew, they moved into their first wooden church building, organized a deacon and steward board, and appointed Bro. Z. R. Hardy as church secretary.

Despite limited financial resources, these pioneers were rich in faith, hope, and determination. Their first revival in 1911 saw two conversions, and under Rev. Davis's two-year leadership, eight new members joined. In 1911, Rev. Hardy was ordained as pastor and began his remarkable thirty-year tenure, during which he baptized approximately 600 individuals and welcomed 400 by Christian experience. In March 1921 alone, fifty-two candidates were added to the church. Under Rev. Hardy, the church was repaired and expanded three times, eventually relocating to McCalop and Swart Streets.

When Rev. Hardy fell ill in 1941, Rev. Oscar Livous, Sr., became assistant pastor and was later elected pastor in 1943. Rev. Livous's leadership saw hundreds christened, baptized, and married, as well as the licensing of ministers. In 1956, McKowen was rebuilt as a beautiful brick structure, a source of great pride for the congregation. Civic expansion in 1961 prompted a search for a new church site, with Sis. Jessie Spand instrumental in securing the property. Several members placed their homes as security for the purchase, demonstrating remarkable commitment. In 1962, after months of dedicated effort, the congregation triumphantly moved into the nearby church. Following Rev. Livous's passing in 1965, Rev. Alvin McCrory was elected pastor.

Under his guidance, the church flourished spiritually and financially, cancelled the mortgage, and expanded its programs to engage all age groups. New ministries and groups, including the General Missionary Society, Concert Choir, Junior Ushers, Drama Club, and Futuresses, were established. Rev. McCrory also launched the Brotherhood and the Annual Easter Breakfast, and initiated youth services. McKowen Baptist Church, under Pastor

McCrory's leadership, opened its doors to the Head Start early childhood program, serving families for three years. He implemented public ordination of deacons and oversaw the completion of a multipurpose addition to the church.

After Rev. McCrory's death in 1979, local ministers and the East Baton Rouge Ministers' Fellowship ensured the continuation of worship services and ceremonies. Dr. S.H. Freeman was elected pastor in 1980, bringing dynamic leadership and fresh ideas. McKowen expanded its ministries, including a Day Care Learning Center, adult and youth Bible classes, and reorganized Christian education. The church welcomed 61 new members in 1981 and continued to thrive. In 1990, Reverend Dr. Gerard A. Robinson, Sr. became the sixth pastor, guiding McKowen Missionary Baptist Church to new heights. Pastor Robinson revitalized ministries such as Music, Christian Education, and Pastor's Care, and introduced numerous new programs including Boyz-n-the Hood, Females of Faith, Drama, GLAM, Mission, Greeters, Brothers & Sisters of Faith, Dance, Nursing, Senior Adult, Youth Mission, Children's Church, Male Chorus, Inspirational Choir, Junior Deacons and Deaconess, Van, Website/Media, Weekly National Intercossory Prayer Call, and a televised worship service.

In 2005, Pastor Robinson established Freedom Tax Services, empowering members to prepare taxes affordably and gain valuable job training. Facility improvements included sanctuary remodeling, business office expansion, a new pastor's study, and a conference room. Pastor Robinson also enhanced Wednesday Bible Study and initiated a youth Bible class for ages 2-11. His leadership and talents have earned him numerous honors, including the Good Samaritan Award, and recognition for his musical and oratory gifts. He has served in many key roles across ministerial alliances, community organizations, and advisory boards, and contributed significantly to public service and community engagement. Under Pastor Robinson's stewardship, 1,189 individuals have been called and baptized, 741 by Christian experience and 448 by baptism.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues and the community to join me in celebrating McKowen Baptist Church, Reverend Robinson, and the faithful congregation for their extraordinary legacy and ongoing impact. Their commitment to faith, service, and leadership continues to inspire and uplift families across Baton Rouge, leaving a legacy for generations to come.

HONORING THE 106TH BIRTHDAY OF MARIA M. CASAS

HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Maria M. Casas, lovingly known by her family as "Nana," and to commemorate her 106th birthday.

Born on September 14, 1920, in Benavides, Texas, to parents Porfirio and Santos Mendez, Maria is the oldest of five children. From her early days in Los Horcones Ranch, she learned the values that would guide her throughout her life: faith, hard work, devotion to family, and generosity toward others.