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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.

Mrs. Casas met her husband, Victoriano Casas, at a church festival in Benavides. Together, they built a loving home and raised five children: Hilda Doris, Norma, Maria Isabel, Victoriano Jr., and Jose Daniel. Over the years, their family has grown to include 14 grandchildren, 32 great-grandchildren, and 6 great-great-grandchildren, with another on the way. Mrs. Casas has the remarkable privilege of witnessing the strength of the family she helped build across many generations.

Mrs. Casas has also spent a lifetime sharing her talents with her community. Whether sewing and quilting, tending her garden, baking and cooking for those she loves, or preparing Pan de Campo with her husband and family for local festivals, she finds joy in bringing people together. A lifetime member of the Catholic Daughters at Saint Francis de Paula Catholic Church, she faithfully supports her parish through quilt donations, fundraising, and service.

For 106 years, Mrs. Casas has shown what it means to live a life grounded in faith, strengthened by family, and enriched by service to others. Her long life is not only an extraordinary milestone, but a tremendous blessing.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 34th Congressional District of Texas, I congratulate Mrs. Maria M. Casas on the joyous occasion of her 106th birthday. I join her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, extended family, and many friends in celebrating a truly remarkable life, and I wish "Nana" continued blessings, happiness, and the love of her family as they honor this very special day.

RECOGNIZING PEACEWORKS, INC.

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Peaceworks, Inc. on 40 years of important work serving domestic violence survivors in rural Colorado mountain communities. Since 1986, Peaceworks, Inc. has offered advocacy and support to survivors of intimate partner violence in Colorado. The nonprofit has provided nearly 2,000 nights of shelter since its original establishment in the spare bedroom of a Park County Commissioner, who took on the need she saw in her town.

Forty years later, Peaceworks, Inc. has become a critical resource, providing shelter, counseling, and educational services across Jefferson and Park counties as the only domestic violence shelter in a 2,800-square-mile region within these mountain communities.

Through its 24/7 SafeLine, Mountain Peace Shelter, mobile and non-residential advocacy, Community Wellness Program, and prevention outreach, PeaceWorks, Inc. addresses both immediate safety and the long-term impact of trauma. With its SafePet program, Peaceworks, Inc. is one of the few domestic violence shelters in the state that allow survivors to bring their pets when seeking services. Under the leadership of Executive Director Sabrina Fritts, the organization has worked tirelessly to address trauma and promote healthy relationships through communal wellness sessions and educational outreach.

On behalf of the people of Colorado's 7th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Peaceworks, Inc. on 40 years of serving and advocating for survivors and wish them continued success in the future.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO UNIVERSITY EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE AT UT DALLAS

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, University Emergency Medical Response at UT Dallas. The University Emergency Medical Response (UEMR) of the University of Texas at Dallas was recently recognized as the Collegiate EMS Organization of the Year for 2025 at the National Collegiate EMS Foundation Conference.

Since being founded in 2017 by just two students, UEMR at UT Dallas has grown into an award winning team of over 90 volunteers who are certified as EMTs, Advanced EMTs, and paramedics. These volunteers answer over 500 emergency calls, support over 65 events each year.

In addition to keeping the campus community safe, UEMR provides training to over 350 students annually through EMT and paramedic courses. With their seventh recognition, we are happy to celebrate their commitment to keeping the UT Dallas community safe.

HONORING NEW LIGHT 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 New Light Missionary Baptist Church of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, founded and organized in 1895 by the late Reverend Tony Scott—a sugar cane farmer, devoted husband to Cecily Scott, and father of nine children. Reverend Scott's vision for an institution of worship was realized on a tract of land in East Baton Rouge Parish, where, with the help of P.H. Handy, S.T. Davis, and H. Warner, a church building was erected. From this humble beginning, Reverend Scott carried out his calling to preach, teach, and lead God's people. A charter for New Light Missionary Baptist Church was established in 1935, reflecting the congregation's growth from a one-room wooden structure to a strong and faithful community.

A devastating storm in 1910 destroyed the original church, forcing its reconstruction on the east side of the railroad tracks on Crane Street in Scotlandville. Years later, the church moved to its present location on Blount Road. After Reverend Scott's passing in 1921, pastoral leadership continued under the late Rev. R.W. Ball and, beginning in 1923, Rev. J.P. Handy. In 1927, after fervent prayer and consultation led by Sister Cicely Scott, Reverend Noah C. Chinn was elected pastor. Under his

divinely inspired leadership, the church was rebuilt in 1955, and several associate ministers served faithfully alongside him. Despite limited financial resources, the pioneers of New Light Missionary Baptist Church remained steadfast, and the church prospered by keeping the Lord first in all things.

In August 1965, Reverend Dr. H.B. Williams became Acting Pastor and was officially elected Pastor that December following Reverend Chinn's passing. Through his God-given vision, the church completed its Community Outreach Center in 2002, expanding efforts to reach, teach, and serve the North Baton Rouge community. Additional ministries were established, including the 4-K Karing Kitchen & Kloth Klostet, a computer lab dedicated in loving memory of Cherlyn Ann Fugler-Young, and the 4CLTP technology program. The center also hosted medical research studies that benefited the community. Mrs. Wilma Williams, Dr. Williams' wife, played an essential role in organizing ministries such as the Nursing Guild, Sisterhood, and recognition days for students. Together, their extraordinary partnership strengthened New Light's mission for decades.

Mr. Speaker, on December 31, 2005, Dr. H.B. Williams installed Dr. Gil H. Wright as Pastor, marking a historic moment as the pastoral mantle was passed with grace and unity. Under Dr. Wright's leadership, New Light Missionary Baptist Church continues to thrive—purchasing a 15-passenger van, remodeling facilities, retiring the loan on the community center, and strengthening marriage ministry, new member engagement, and communication through announcement monitors. As New Light marches forward, pointing souls to Christ, Dr. Wright's dedication, prayerful leadership, and decades of faithful service remain evident in every facet of ministry. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring New Light Missionary Baptist Church for its rich legacy, enduring faith, and unwavering commitment to God's work in the Baton Rouge community.

HONORING DR. RICHARD BATES ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THUNDER BAY COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICE

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and recognize Dr. Richard Bates on his retirement from Thunder Bay Community Health Service. Throughout his distinguished career, Dr. Bates has dedicated himself to improving access to quality healthcare for the people of Northern Michigan while exemplifying compassionate leadership and an unwavering commitment to rural communities.

A graduate of Alma College, Michigan State University, and Wayne State University School of Medicine, Dr. Bates has served Northeast Michigan for more than twenty-five years as both a trusted physician and respected healthcare leader. During his tenure as Chief Executive Officer of Thunder Bay Community Health Service, he expanded access to care by growing the organization's services, including the launch of its Women's Health program, ensuring more families throughout the region received the care they deserve.