EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING 50 YEARS OF INTERAMERICAN BANK

HON. CARLOS A. GIMENEZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. GIMENEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Interamerican Bank as it celebrates 50 years of service to South Florida. Founded in Miami-Dade County on September 10, 1976, by Agustin C. Velasco, Interamerican Bank represents a remarkable story of faith, family, perseverance, and the American Dream.

Mr. Velasco fled the communist Castro regime in 1961 with his wife, Nieves, and their two young children, Felisa and Agustin, Jr. Like so many Cuban exiles, he arrived in Miami determined to rebuild his life in freedom. He worked in factories, started his own business, and just 15 years after arriving in the United States, founded Interamerican Bank.

For five decades, Interamerican Bank has remained a family-owned community bank dedicated to serving the people and businesses of South Florida. Today, the Bank operates five branches, including its Hialeah branch, which proudly celebrates its 30th anniversary this year.

The legacy of Agustin C. Velasco, Sr. continues through three generations of the Velasco family. His son, Agustin Velasco, Jr., serves as President and Chief Executive Officer, while his son-in-law, Ibrahim Pacheco, has provided nearly three decades of leadership as Chairman of the Board. His granddaughters, Isis Pacheco Velasco, Christie Velasco, and Lindsie Velasco, are also helping carry this proud family tradition into the future.

Interamerican Bank is more than a South Florida institution, its story embodies the promise of our great Nation: that those who flee tyranny for freedom can work hard, build something lasting, and create opportunities for generations to come. I congratulate Interamerican Bank, the Velasco family, and its entire team on 50 years of service and wishing them continued success for many years to come.

HONORING FAITH CHAPEL CHURCH OF GOD

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Faith Chapel Church of God, located at 995 Staring Lane in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, a steadfast congregation serving East Baton Rouge Parish since 1948. Faith Chapel's beginnings trace back to a letter sent by Rev. Rose Williams of Baton Rouge to Rev. George W. Burns, then pastor of Caffin Avenue Church of God in New Orleans. Rev. Williams' concern for a ''colored church'' affiliated with the National Church of God Fellowship (Anderson, Indiana) led Rev. Burns to establish prayer meetings at the home of Sis. Pearl Davis, near the current church site. These gatherings soon blossomed into Sunday School services and the formation of Faith Chapel Church of God.

Faith Chapel has distinguished itself with a rich history of children's ministry, notably transporting children, including those from the Blundon Home orphanage, to Sunday School since its inception. The church's first pastor, Rev. Charles Wilson, III (1949 to 1952), played a vital role in recruiting and transporting these children, a tradition that continued through the mid-sixties. Over the years, the Lord has blessed Faith Chapel with godly leaders, including Rev. Rose B. Williams and the late Rev. Dr. J.D. Brown, who served the longest of all senior pastors. During Dr. Brown's 35-year pastorate, the church eliminated its mortgage, erected an educational facility, and saw five of its members ordained to Christian ministry, with a sixth, Rev. Chibuike Azuoru, ordained and supported in establishing Christ the King Christian Center in Baton Rouge.

Dr. Brown also mentored numerous young preachers and led a prison ministry at Angola, leaving a lasting impact on prisoners and their families. Throughout his ministry, Reverend Rosella T. Williams faithfully served as Assistant Pastor, and though retired, she continues to support Faith Chapel through prayer ministry and mentoring young ministers. Today, Rev. Dr. Bartholomew M. Riggins, affectionately known as ''Pastor Bart,'' leads Faith Chapel, having been installed in 2011. Under Pastor Bart's leadership, the church has flourished, expanding its ministries and daily operations, resulting in spiritual and numerical growth, and fostering partnerships with area churches, hospitals, and government organizations.

Faith Chapel has been recognized as a leader in bringing healing and wholeness to the Gardere community, notably through its involvement in The Gardere Initiative. This partnership addresses substance abuse and other challenges impacting local families and neighborhoods. The church's ministries include neighborhood prayer walks, collegiate outreach, children's programs, marriage and singles ministries, men's and women's fellowship, tutoring, scholarship support for college students, bus ministry, breakfast ministry, and a growing electronic and social media presence.

Currently, Faith Chapel is engaged in a building campaign to construct a much-needed multi-purpose facility to meet its expanding ministry needs and allow for continued growth. The first phase of this building project is nearing completion, marking another milestone in Faith Chapel's enduring legacy of faith, service, and leadership in Baton Rouge.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in celebrating Faith Chapel Church of God, Pastor Bart Riggins, and the devoted congregation for nearly eight decades of remarkable service that uplifts and inspires the Baton Rouge community.

HONORING SHELLY ''SHIRLEY'' FRAZIER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Shelly ''Shirley'' Frazier.

Shelly Frazier is a 1973 graduate of North Natchez High School. She continued her education at Meadow-Draughon Business College in New Orleans, Louisiana, where she earned a degree in business administration in 1974.

Shelly began her career with AT&T, where she worked for 32 years before retiring in 2010. During her career, her work took her to several locations, including Jackson, Mississippi; Pensacola, Florida; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Atlanta, Georgia. Her career reflected a strong work ethic, professionalism, and commitment to excellence.

Her commitment to service continued well beyond her professional career. Mrs. Frazier is currently serving her third term as the District 4 Election Commissioner for Adams County, where she continues to serve her community through the administration of local elections. She is also a lifetime member of the NAACP and has faithfully served as secretary for more than 15 years.

Shelly Frazier is married to Billie Joe Frazier, and together they have three daughters, Jarita Frazier-King, Courtney Frazier, and Skylar King-Frazier, and one son, Keimon B. Frazier. They also cherish four grandchildren and one great-granddaughter, affectionately known as their ''chocolate drop.''

Mrs. Frazier has also played an important role in preserving her family's history, culture, and culinary traditions. Alongside her mother and daughters, she helped launch the Natchez Heritage School of Cooking, a family business dedicated to preserving and sharing the rich foodways and cultural heritage of Natchez and the surrounding region.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Shelly ''Shirley'' Frazier of Natchez, Mississippi, for her achievements and dedicated service to the Natchez-Adams County community.

RECOGNIZING EMILY FLORES

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Emily Flores for earning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

● This ''bullet'' symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Emily has overcome many challenges along her journey to success, demonstrating perseverance at every step. Students who strive to make the most of their education, like Emily, develop crucial skills and a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives. This award is a testament to Emily's hard work, determination, and perseverance at Jefferson Jr/Sr High School and is clearly just the beginning of a bright and promising future.

It is my honor to congratulate Emily Flores on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO LIGHT THE WORLD GIVING MACHINE

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Light the World Giving Machine, which returned to North Texas this past holiday season, turning generosity into action across our communities. These red vending machines allow donors to give meaningful items, like warm clothing, meals, medical supplies, and even livestock, to local and global charities serving those most in need.

The Giving Machines ensure that 100 percent of every donation goes directly to charity, with all operating costs covered. In 2024, Giving Machines placed in three North Texas cities helped raise more than $600,000, proving once again that when North Texans come together, the impact is powerful and far-reaching.

HONORING THE LOUISIANA EAST FIRST JURISDICTION

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the history of the Louisiana East First Jurisdiction in Louisiana, a legacy built on devotion, perseverance, and the unwavering faith of its founding fathers and mothers.

Louisiana East First Jurisdiction history began in the early nineteenth century when Elders E.D. Smith and C. Coleman traveled to southeast Mississippi preaching the doctrine of holiness. These pioneers were not focused on establishing a church; instead, they spread the message of holiness and fostered what became the Holiness Movement. Among their converts were brothers Henry Feltus and James Feltus, Sr. of Centerville, Mississippi. Though initially opposed, the brothers were soon converted and became staunch supporters. The acceptance of holiness in Mississippi occurred in 1907.

In 1910, Elder Henry Feltus began pastoring new converts of holiness at a gathering in Baton Rouge called the Railroad Avenue Church. Later that year, the founder and General Overseer of the Church of God in Christ, Bishop Charles Harrison Mason, journeyed to Baton Rouge and preached the doctrine of holiness. After hearing Bishop Mason's powerful and anointed teaching, Henry and James Feltus received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

However, the Feltus brothers were still serving under Overseer Elder E.D. Smith, who taught an erroneous doctrine that saints would never die a natural death unless they had sinned in some way. The brothers rejected this teaching and invited Bishop Mason to enlighten Elder Smith regarding the so-called 'never die doctrine.' When Bishop Mason came to New Orleans in 1913 to address the doctrine, Elder Smith did not receive the correction. Consequently, the Feltus brothers chose to follow Bishop Mason. This moment marked the beginning of the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) in Louisiana.

From that point forward, the Church of God in Christ operated as one jurisdiction under Elder Henry Feltus. Bishop Mason appointed him State Overseer and appointed Mother Eliza Hollins as State Mother. Known for her strict discipline and distinctive black attire, Mother Hollins strongly influenced women's ministry throughout the jurisdiction.

As membership grew, Overseer Feltus recognized the need for additional leadership. In 1914, he appointed Elders S. Lazard and C. Ealy as district superintendents. Overseer Feltus passed away in 1920, and Bishop Mason appointed his brother, Elder James Feltus, Sr., as the new State Overseer.

Like his brother, Overseer James Feltus, Sr. founded and developed several churches across Louisiana. Under his leadership, many pastors were appointed to lead assemblies embracing the Holiness Movement. In 1938, Overseer Feltus expanded the jurisdiction by creating additional districts and appointing Elders John W. White, C.B. Norris, and James Edwards as superintendents.

As the Church grew, administrative challenges increased. Out of respect for Overseer Feltus' service, Bishop Mason kept Louisiana as one jurisdiction during his lifetime. After his passing in 1946, Bishop Mason divided the state into two jurisdictions. Elder Seaners Lazard was appointed to lead the churches east of the Mississippi River, while Elder John Walter White was appointed to lead the churches west of the river.

During this period, Bishop Mason began conferring the title of ''Bishop'' upon those leading jurisdictions. Bishop Lazard led the Eastern Louisiana Jurisdiction for 21 years until his passing in 1967. The brethren overwhelmingly united behind Superintendent Willie K. Gordon, Sr., who had tirelessly assisted Bishop Lazard during his tenure. Bishop Gordon was highly respected for his generosity and his mentorship of many preachers. Under his leadership, the jurisdiction grew significantly.

In 1987, the Eastern Louisiana Jurisdiction was divided into three separate jurisdictions: Louisiana East First under Bishop James E. Gordon; Louisiana East Second under Bishop Joseph A. Thompson; and Louisiana East Third under Bishop Howard E. Quillen, Jr. Later, in June 2001, a fourth jurisdiction—the Greater New Orleans Jurisdiction—was established under Bishop Lindell Benford Brown.

Bishop James Earl Gordon served the Louisiana East First Jurisdiction with profound dignity. He was known for his generosity and loyal support of the national church. His capstone achievement was the purchase of a new, multi-million dollar jurisdictional headquarters—a 30-plus acre campus owned by the saints of God. After 27 years of service, Bishop Gordon entered the Church Triumphant.

In 2014, Bishop Alphonso Denson, Sr. was consecrated as Bishop of the Louisiana East First Jurisdiction by Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake of the Church of God in Christ. Bishop Denson's leadership ushered in a new generation of vision for the 21st century church. With the help of the Lord, the jurisdiction continues to thrive, honoring its past while pressing boldly into its future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Louisiana East First Jurisdiction for its historic legacy, its commitment to holiness, and for the visionary leadership that has guided its growth for more than a century.

COMMEMORATING MR. RICHARD PHILLIP STROUD SR.'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. BARRY LOUDERMILK

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 14, 2026

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate and honor Mr. Richard Philip Stroud, Sr., of Georgia, as he calebrated his 100th birthday on September 9, 2026.

It is without question that Mr. Stroud has led an extraordinary life, one that is a testament to service, hard work, profound Christian faith, and devotion to family. Over the course of a century, he has answered his Nation's call in the United States Navy, contributed to some of our Nation's most important aviation programs, raised a family, and built a multigenerational legacy.

Richard was born on September 9, 1926, on a farm in Bonham, Texas, the eldest son of Coy and Lucille Stroud. His love and passion for the skies began when, as a boy, a Piper Cub airplane landed near his home. After some flight instruction, he made his first solo flight. That momentous occasion would set the course for the rest of his life.

In 1944, with World War II raging across the globe, Richard joined the United States Navy, standing alongside thousands of other servicemembers prepared to defend our country and the freedoms we hold dear. At only 17 years old, Richard qualified for the Navy's flight training program. With the changing needs of the war effort, however, he was instead trained as a machine gunner for the SB2C Helldiver bomber. Sent to Memphis, Tennessee for training, Richard distinguished himself immediately, finishing first in his class and becoming the first sailor in his class to strike all 300 clay targets during his final shooting test.

After the Allied victory, Richard continued his naval training, graduating from flight school and earning his wings as a naval aviator in Corpus Christi, Texas. In June of 1950, when war broke out in the Korean Peninsula, Richard once more answered his Nation's call, serving on an aircraft carrier, participating in patrol operations, and flying numerous missions for more than two years. He accumulated over 500 landings, including one during a Category-4 hurricane, and piloted aircraft, such as the SNJ Texan, the UC–45 Expeditor, the R4D Skytrain, R6D Liftmaster, F6F Hellcat, F4U Corsair, and the TBM Avenger.