

carry the name of the Honorable Robert Benham, who in 1989 became the first African American appointed to the Supreme Court of Georgia and who served as its Chief Justice from 1995 to 2001.

Mr. Speaker, that is a fitting name to attach to this man's life. Justice Benham reached a place on that Court where no one who looked like him had ever stood, and he spent his years there making certain he would note the last. Virgil Adams has done the same work in the courtrooms of Middle Georgia. He earned an award given in Justice Benham's name the only way it can be earned—not by what he has won, but by what he has given away.

Mr. Speaker, the founder of Albany State University, Dr. Joseph Winthrop Holley, gave his memoir a title that has outlived him: "You Can't Build a Chimney from the Top" Dr. Holley opened that school in 1903 with almost nothing, in a Georgia that had no intention of helping him, because he understood that anything built to stand must be built from the bottom—one stone, one child, one year at a time. Virgil Adams is what that chimney looks like when it is finished. To his everlasting credit, he keeps climbing back down to the bottom to lay stone for somebody else.

Mr. Speaker, I have known Virgil Adams a long time, and I can tell this House that the honor he receives tonight is not the beginning of his service. It is only Middle Georgia's belated way of saying thank you.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife Vivian and me, along with the more than 765,000 people of Georgia's 2nd Congressional District in congratulating Attorney Virgil L. Adams upon receiving the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Central Georgia Council, Boy Scouts of America, and upon his recognition with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 26th Annual Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service, in thanking Paula and their family for sharing him with us, and in wishing him continued success in all his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HERBERT C. CONAWAY, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 284.

CELEBRATING TRUST FOR AMERICA'S HEALTH

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr Speaker, I rise to honor and celebrate the work of an extraordinary organization, Trust for America's Health, which for 25 years has served as a preeminent voice for public health advocates in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Trust for America's Health, or TFAH, is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2026. Formed with a vision to advocate for environmental and public health, it has since broadened its mission to envisioning "a nation that values the health and well-being of all and where prevention and health equity are foundational to policymaking at all levels of society."

The first chairman of TFAH's Board of Directors was former Connecticut Senator and Governor Lowell Weicker. His work leading TFAH's Board of Directors helped establish and strengthen the organization as a voice for public health in the decade after 9/11.

Today, TFAH's extensive body of research includes pivotal reports on issues such as obesity prevention, public health funding, emergency preparedness, and addressing the epidemics of deaths from overdose, suicide, and alcohol. Every four years, TFAH also publishes a Blueprint for the incoming presidential administration and congress. Each of these reports translates evidence into policy action, helping to inform key legislation and funding priorities.

TFAH's research and advocacy have been integral in building our Nation's health security, advocating for the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act and its reauthorizations and strengthening foundational public health preparedness programs like the Public Health Emergency Preparedness program.

TFAH was also an essential voice in preparing for and responding in times of crisis. Their work during health emergencies from H1N1 to Ebola to Zika to Covid-19 always focused on supporting the underlying infrastructure to keep our country safer in future emergencies.

As an appropriator, I have relied on TFAH's trusted voice and coalition-building to support significant and innovative investments in public health, such as the Prevention and Public Health Fund, public health infrastructure funding, and support for addressing adverse childhood experiences and funding suicide prevention programs.

As someone who has been fortunate enough to employ several former TFAH employees, I can say firsthand that their expertise has always been valued.

Today, TFAH's work matters more than ever, as public health faces major headwinds, workforce challenges, and unstable funding. I join the extended public health community in celebrating their accomplishments. It gives me hope about the next 25 years knowing that TFAH can continue to be a bridge to the future of public health, promoting and protecting it for generations to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 296, and YEA on Roll Call No. 297.

HONORING DR. ADDIE MILLER, SUPERINTENDENT OF NORTH BOLIVAR CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Addie Carmichael Miller on her appointment as Superintendent of the North Bolivar Consolidated School District and to congratulate her as she begins this important new chapter of leadership.

Effective July 1, 2026, Dr. Miller assumed leadership of North Bolivar Consolidated School District, bringing years of educational experience and a deep commitment to academic excellence, student achievement, and continuous improvement. A native of Shelby, Mississippi, Dr. Miller is a proud 2000 graduate of Broad Street High School. She began her career in education as a classroom teacher in 2004 and later served as assistant principal at McEvans Elementary School, and principal of I.T. Montgomery Elementary School in Mound Bayou. She most recently served as the district's Federal Programs Director.

Dr. Miller was recognized as the district's 2022 Administrator of the Year, reflecting her dedication and leadership in education. Her familiarity with North Bolivar's students, schools, families, and communities provides a strong foundation as she leads the district into its next phase of growth and development.

As Superintendent, Dr. Miller will oversee academic, operational, and strategic initiatives throughout C.E. Hall Elementary, I.T. Montgomery Elementary, and Northside High School. Her leadership will be instrumental in advancing student outcomes, strengthening school operations, and ensuring that district priorities remain aligned with the needs of the community.

In her first official Board of Trustees meeting as Superintendent, Dr. Miller was described as leading with a shared commitment to purpose, progress, and lasting impact on every student. This aligns with a philosophy that values not only measurable academic results but also the long-term development and well-being of students.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Addie Miller on this well-deserved appointment and commend her for her continued service to the students, families, and communities of North Bolivar County. I am confident that her leadership, vision, and commitment to excellence will help create meaningful opportunities and lasting success for the scholars she serves.

I congratulate Dr. Miller and send her my best wishes for a successful tenure as Superintendent of the North Bolivar Consolidated School District.

HONORING NATIONAL HISPANIC
HERITAGE MONTH**HON. FRANK J. MRVAN**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month and its 2026 theme, Together We Are More. From September 15 to October 15 each year, the people of the United States are granted the opportunity to commemorate the rich culture, established traditions, and invaluable contributions of Hispanic Americans throughout our country's history.

Hispanic Heritage Month begins each year on September 15 and recognizes the anniversaries of the independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Mexico and Chile observe their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively. This month, communities across Indiana's 1st Congressional District will gather for parades and celebrations to observe National Hispanic Heritage Month in the city of East Chicago, Indiana.

As a Nation, we are grateful for the hard work and invaluable contributions of generations of Hispanic Americans. The cultural vitality and economic success of Northwest Indiana depend on the Hispanic families within our community. Therefore, in accordance with this year's theme, I would like to extend my gratitude to the many family-owned Hispanic businesses in Northwest Indiana that have contributed immeasurably to the prosperity and development of our region and beyond.

It is my honor to recognize the Garza family, the owners of El Popular, which is the oldest Mexican business within the United States. In 1925, El Popular was founded in East Chicago by Vincente Garza, who had migrated to the area from Monterrey, Mexico only a few years prior. He took several family recipes with him and a dream of founding a Mexican food manufacturing business. El Popular started off as a local family business, but because of the tireless efforts of the Garza family, their products are now offered in more than 10,000 locations nationwide. The Garza family and El Popular are responsible for the creation of hundreds of jobs that support hardworking families throughout our region.

Vincente Garza eventually passed the company to his son, Richard. In 2002, Richard's son, Edward, became the third-generation owner of El Popular. Throughout this time, the business has remained dedicated to its mission of providing for the community through the preservation and distribution of authentic Mexican flavors. For their efforts to create job opportunities and grow our economy, the Garza family and El Popular are worthy of the highest praise.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and honoring the generations of families who have built successful businesses that contribute to our society and our economy. This month, and always, we appreciate the deep heritage and cultural diversity Hispanic Americans have promoted within our country.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN
HERO CATHERINE "CAT" JOHNSON**HON. BETH VAN DUYNE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Catherine "Cat" Johnson, a Southlake native and a Shelton School alumna, who recently began her journey at Texas Tech University. She has earned national recognition for her leadership and service to our North Texas community.

This summer, Cat created take-home meal kits that ensured the children would have access to healthy meals over the weekend if their families were suffering from financial hardships. Cat worked with GRACE in Grapevine to bring her project, "Feed our Kids Weekend Edition" to life. This project led to her earning the Girl Scouts Gold Award, the highest honor in Girl Scouting from the Girl Scouts of Texas Oklahoma Plains. In recognition for her impact in the community in helping address childhood hunger she received a \$5,000 national scholarship from Girl Scouts of the USA.

I congratulate Cat on this recognition for her service to our community and wish her the best in her year ahead at Texas Tech University.

RECOGNIZING NYDIA PADILLA-
RODRIGUEZ**HON. JOSEPH D. MORELLE**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Mrs. Nydia Padilla-Rodriguez of Rochester, New York, on the occasion of her retirement after a lifetime of extraordinary service to our community.

Born in Puerto Rico and later making Rochester her home, Nydia Padilla-Rodriguez has devoted her life to preserving and celebrating Puerto Rican culture through the performing arts. As the leader of the Borinquen Dance Theatre for more than 40 years, she has inspired generations of young people through dance, music, and folklore, while creating opportunities for individuals of all backgrounds to experience and appreciate Puerto Rican traditions. Together with her husband, John Padilla-Rodriguez, she has provided steadfast leadership and extraordinary personal generosity to build the theatre into a treasured cultural institution and a cornerstone of Rochester's vibrant arts community.

Nydia's own journey is a testament to resilience and the transformative power of opportunity. Rising from an at-risk youth to become a respected educator, mentor, and cultural leader, she transformed her personal experiences into a lifelong commitment to serving others. Over more than 30 years as an educator, she has inspired and empowered countless young people to pursue their aspirations while remaining deeply connected to their cultural heritage.

Throughout her distinguished career, Nydia has been recognized with numerous honors, including the Girl Scouts of Genesee Valley's

Woman of Influence Award, the IBERO-American Action League's Alice Torres Award, Geva Theatre's Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Award, the Rochester Business Journal's Woman of Excellence Award, and designation as a New York State Woman of Distinction, among many others. These accolades reflect not only her remarkable accomplishments, but also the profound and lasting impact she has made on the Rochester community.

Mr. Speaker, as Mrs. Nydia Padilla-Rodriguez begins a well-earned retirement, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating her extraordinary legacy of leadership, service, and cultural stewardship. Her unwavering dedication to uplifting others through education and the arts has enriched our community immeasurably, and her influence will continue to inspire generations to come. I extend my deepest gratitude and best wishes to Nydia and her family as she embarks on this next chapter.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NO FENC-
ING AT THE UNITED STATES
CAPITOL COMPLEX ACT**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the No Fencing at the United States Capitol Complex Act, which would prohibit the installation of permanent fencing at the United States Capitol complex. Senator CHRIS VAN HOLLEN is introducing this bill in the Senate.

Permanent fencing at the Capitol complex would send an un-American message to the Nation and the world by transforming our democracy from one that is accessible, transparent, and of the people, to one that is closed off, secretive, and fearful of its own citizens. It would tell the world that the most powerful Nation must rely on crude barriers for safety instead of state-of-the-art intelligence and security protocols. The Capitol complex has welcomed First Amendment demonstrations for centuries without becoming a fortress. The openness of the Capitol complex and our democracy is a strength, not a weakness that needs to be rooted out.

Furthermore, the Capitol complex does not exist in a vacuum. It is immediately surrounded by residential neighborhoods and local businesses. Permanent fencing would cause serious damage to the fabric of these communities. After the January 6th insurrection, the Capitol complex became an untraversable fortress surrounded by frightening fences capped with barbed wire typical of authoritarian regimes. These residents and businesses were more than understanding as their neighborhoods turned into militarized zones. They waited patiently as officers checked their identification on their walks home or took alternative routes when they found blocked streets. Permanent fencing would limit their ability, as well as the general public's ability, to enjoy the public spaces that define our Nation's capital.

The distance between government and the people has grown, with trust in government at historic lows. We should not increase that distance by placing intimidating barriers between public servants and the people they serve, especially when such barriers are unnecessary.