Evening Star continued to grow in spiritual aspirations, community outreach, and ministries under Reverend Lee's leadership. Many milestones were accomplished, including paved parking lot and purchased van; outreach ministry to the nursing home and drug rehab center; Sisterhood and Brotherhood collaboration with Shady Grove First Baptist Church; establishment of male chorus and combined choirs; creation of the Board of Christian Education, Ushers' Ministry, and Deaconess Ministry; Pastor's Travel Expense Club; Church Mission Fund, Boy Scouts; Project Drug Free Lines; Saturday Street Prayer Ministry; Youth Council and Ministry; Summer Youth Employment; Summer Enrichment Program; Tutorial Program; Summer History Learning Project; Exercise Program; participation in local, state, national Congress of Christian Education, and international Baptist World Congress events; and rebuilding and renovating Evening Star Baptist Church from 1996 to 1997.

On July 7, 1996, Evening Star held its groundbreaking service for a long-awaited project. Renovations began on July 8, 1996, and on August 17, 1997, the congregation moved into the new sanctuary. In July 2001, after serving seventeen years, Reverend Lionel Lee, Sr. was called to his reward. In December 2002, Reverend Dr. Roderick A. Betts was elected and installed as pastor. Under Reverend Betts' leadership, Evening Star replaced its organ and sound system, established an Inspirational Choir, revived the Liturgical Dance Team, held Saturday Intercessory Prayer, established an Oratorical Ministry, and formed a Women Choir.

We acknowledge Evening Star Baptist Church for recently celebrating its 129th Anniversary. It is a thriving community church under the leadership of Pastor Aldora Sanford, who has served this great church since 2012. I ask my colleagues to join me honoring Evening Star Baptist Church for over a century for service, fellowship, and spreading of the word of God.

HONORING THE LIFE, SERVICE AND LEGACY OF THE HONORABLE HELEN M. JOHNSON

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 honor the life and legacy of Mrs. Helen M. Johnson, a trailblazing public servant, entrepreneur, community leader, devoted matriarch, and woman of faith from Hollandale, Mississippi, who passed away on August 22, 2026.

Helen was born on September 15, 1954, the thirteenth child of Leroy and Daisy Smith. She was educated at Simmons Elementary School and Simmons High School and later earned her GED. A lifelong learner, she continued her education through Draughons Business College, Delta State University, Mississippi State University Extension Service, and the International Institute of Municipal Clerks.

Helen's life was marked by perseverance. As a young woman, she struggled with a severe stutter that affected her confidence. Through speech therapy, determination, and faith, she overcame that challenge. The young woman who once struggled to speak confidently would later become a respected public official, trainer, mentor, and community leader.

Helen built a distinguished career in municipal government. She became the first Black radio dispatcher for the City of Hollandale, later served approximately fifteen years as Deputy City Clerk, and in 2001 became the first Black City Clerk of Hollandale, Mississippi. She faithfully served as City Clerk until 2021.

Her commitment to public service did not end with her retirement as City Clerk. Helen continued training and mentoring municipal clerks, established HMJ Consulting Services, LLC, and served as a Municipal Clerk Consultant Officer with HOPE Enterprise. She later continued her service to the citizens of Hollandale as an Alderwoman and Vice Mayor of the City of Hollandale, positions she faithfully held at the time of her passing.

Helen was also a successful entrepreneur. Alongside her husband, John Wesley Johnson, she began a jewelry business that eventually grew into Something Special Fashions, with locations in Hollandale, Leland, Sunflower, and Cleveland. A talented seamstress, she was well known for her creativity, elegance, professionalism, and sense of style.

Helen's commitment to service extended throughout her community. She served in leadership roles with the Hollandale Rotary Club, Mississippi Municipal Clerks Association, Community Foundation of Washington County, South Delta Planning & Development District, Hollandale Economic and Community Development Foundation, and Hollandale Community Volunteers for Progress.

Her faith remained the foundation of her life. Helen joined First Baptist Missionary Baptist Church at the age of twelve and remained a faithful member throughout her lifetime.

Above all, Helen was devoted to her family. She was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, aunt, mentor, and friend. She believed that family was defined not only by blood, but also by love, sacrifice, guidance, and care.

Mr. Speaker, Helen M. Johnson lived a life of faith, perseverance, service, and purpose. From breaking barriers in municipal government to serving as Vice Mayor and Alderwoman, she devoted her life to strengthening Hollandale and improving the lives of those around her.

The young girl who once struggled to find her voice ultimately used that voice to teach, lead, encourage, and serve.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and legacy of Alderwoman Helen M. Johnson and in extending our deepest condolences to her family, friends, church family, colleagues, and the entire Hollandale community.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO JULES PETERSON

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, Jules Peterson. She is the Founder and Director of Loving Long Ears Donkey Therapy & Sanctuary in Southlake. Since 2017, Loving Long Ears has been a sanctuary for donkeys that have been neglected, abused, or surrendered, giving them not just a new home, but also a new purpose. They serve as one of only four donkey rescues in the United States, and the only one that also offers a therapy program.

Through Jules' dedication, she has built a place where rescued donkeys are rehabilitated and trained as therapy animals. These gentle companions now bring peace, comfort, and healing to veterans, first responders, children, and adults.

We thank Jules for dedicating her time, energy, and heart to creating Loving Long Ears Donkey Therapy & Sanctuary.

RECOGNIZING ARTURO ARO CALVILLO

HON. BRITTANY PETTERSEN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

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

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

It is my honor to congratulate Arturo Aro Calvillo on achieving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award.

HONORING CHERYL D. LARKIN

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, from the 24th District of the great state of Florida, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of Alpha Alpha Beta Omega Chapter under the Leadership of Basileus Cheryl D. Larkin on the occasion of the end of her presidency. I include in the RECORD the following proclamation:

Whereas, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Alpha Alpha Beta Omega Chapter, was chartered on April 15, 2018, by 58 dedicated Charter Members who sought to uphold the Sorority's legacy of service and sisterhood; and Whereas, the chapter has since grown in both membership and impact, expanding to include 115 dynamic women; and Whereas, under the extraordinary leadership of Charter Member and Basileus Cheryl D. Larkin, who has faithfully served as President from January 2023 to December 2024, the chapter flourished in alignment with her administration's inspiring theme, We Are One—Excelling Through Service, Leadership, and the Spirit of Sisterly Love; and

Whereas, the Alpha Alpha Beta Omega Chapter has remained steadfast in its commitment to Service to All Mankind, demonstrating exceptional dedication to the local community and beyond through programs that uplift, empower, and inspire, and Whereas, in November 2024, under Basileus' Larkin's leadership, the chapter achieved a monumental milestone by hosting its Inaugural Membership Experience, welcoming nine new members into this illustrious sisterhood; and Whereas, Alpha Alpha Beta Omega Chapter was honored with numerous awards and accolades for its outstanding service, leadership, and sisterhood, including 1st Place, AKA International Program—Strengthen Our Sisterhood Award (Large Chapter), 2023 Reactivation Award, 2023 1st Place S.O.A.R. Award (Large Chapter), 2023 Best of the Best Graduate Chapters, 2024 Ethel A. Grice Attendance Award, and 2024 Eva Harris Cofield Attendance Award.

The chapter demonstrated a commitment to empowering youth through the Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) program, developing future leaders in the local community, and Whereas, Alpha Alpha Beta Omega Chapter addressed critical needs through its CHIPP initiative, which provided meals to local elementary school students, embodying the Sorority's mission of impactful service; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved that I, Frederica S. Wilson, a Member of the United States House of Representatives, representing the 24th Congressional District of Florida, do hereby recognize and celebrate the outstanding achievements of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Alpha Alpha Beta Omega Chapter, under the transformative leadership of Basileus Cheryl D. Larkin. I extend heartfelt gratitude to Basileus Cheryl D. Larkin for her unwavering commitment to excellence, service, and sisterhood, and recognize her pivotal role in leading the We Are One Administration to unparalleled success.

HONORING FREEMAN BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. CLEO FIELDS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Freeman Baptist Church, located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The History of Freeman Baptist Church leads back to the days of Jesus Christ and his public ministry if one would be technical or critical. Scriptural procedure of the Church is depicted in the Old Testament. The church is the espoused bride of Jesus Christ and is guided by the Holy Spirit.

In the year of 1919 on the rolling hills of East Feliciana Parish in Ethel, Louisiana, the Little Evergreen Baptist Church was born, under the guidance of the Reverend Albert Freeman as Pastor. It was a one room, wooden church with a small membership but large in praising God. Sunday school and Church Services were held two times a month. Under the leadership of Reverend Albert Freeman, the church was renamed the Freeman Baptist Church. The founding members were: Reverend Albert Freeman—Pastor, Brother Ike Johnson—Head Deacon; Members—Brother Nathan Ross, Joe Clark, Newman Freeman; Sisters—Martha Freeman and Alberta Clark.

The adversity of trials and tribulations, ups and downs were prevalent but not prevailing because they knew God was in control. The death of the founders left them with consternation, but prayer kept them covered and the membership, though small, sustained.

Faithful leadership continued under Reverend Jessie O'Conner, Brother Charles Armstead, Sr., Head Deacon; Brother Charles Armstead, Jr.; Sisters Rhoda Taylor, Barbara O'Conner, Nancy O'Conner, Nathelda O'Conner, Mary Johnson, and Sister Ola M. Armstead, who was the sole remaining member from the original membership of Little Evergreen Baptist Church.

Reverend Richardson was small in stature but a powerhouse of spirit with preaching and singing like Paul and Silas fused together into one. He was a man with a vision, inspired by the Lord with the gift of preaching the gospel as well as a gift in carpentry. Reverend Richardson spearheaded the renovation of Freeman with the assistance of the men of the church and friends in the community, transforming it from a one room building to the church we sit in today. Under his leadership the little church by the side of the road grew spiritually, financially, and numerically.

Reverend Richardson and his associate ministers, Reverend Jessie O'Conner, Reverend Willie Mackie, and Reverend Eddie Lee, provided many spirit-filled services.

In 1996, Reverend Richardson faced health complications and being a man of spiritual discernment, advised the church that when his task in ministry was finished, he wanted the members to stick together and find a leader. During his illness, Reverend Mac Henry Wallace visited Freeman several times by invitation. In June 1997, Reverend Richardson transitioned from his earthly sojourn to his heavenly inheritance.

Continuing the legacy, Reverend Mac Henry Wallace accepted the call as pastor and was installed on September 12, 1997. Under Reverend Wallace's leadership, Freeman continued to have spirit-filled services. Over the years Freeman was blessed with several associate ministers who were great assets, helping the church move in the right direction.

In April 2002, the structural foundation of the church had to be reinforced. In August 2002, the church purchased two additional acres of property and in October 2002 completed paving the new grounds. On December 7, 2003, a rededication service was held for the newly renovated building.

In 2018, Reverend Wallace resigned as pastor. Without an immediate successor, Freeman stood on Romans 8.31—'If God be for us, who can be against us?' God sent Reverend Murion 'Reverend Happy' Webb, a Holy Ghost-filled man of God, to shepherd Freeman until a new pastor was elected. In May 2019, Reverend Robert L. Scott, Jr. accepted the call to pastor Freeman. Pastor Scott is a dedicated leader with profound devotion to helping God's people, a prolific spirit-filled pastor, teacher, and mentor who utilizes his multifaceted gifts throughout the community.

We pray that God will continue to bless us and each day bring us closer to Him, striving to retain the bright hope that burned so brightly years ago. Freeman Baptist Church remains committed to reaching out in love, winning souls for Christ, and doing only those things that will glorify our Heavenly Father. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Freeman Baptist Church, for its dedication to spreading the word of God.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ALFONSO ''ALFY'' FANJUL, JR.

HON. KAT CAMMACK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Mrs. CAMMACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Alfonso ''Alfy'' Fanjul, Jr., a Florida agricultural leader who passed away on August 3 at the age of 89.

Alfy was born in Havana, Cuba in 1937. His family had spent generations building a bustling sugar business. Then came Castro's communist revolution. In 1959, the Castro regime seized then land, mills, homes, and businesses.

At 23, Alfy fled Cuba and came to the United States. Here, he helped rebuild what communism had taken away. He and his family built what became Florida Crystals in western Palm Beach County, a pillar of Florida agriculture. After his father's death in 1980, Alfy became chairman and CEO of the family companies, leading them for more than four decades.

He understood something every farmer in my district knows. Agriculture is more than a business. It is a responsibility to the people who work the land and the communities that depend on it. Alfy was the living embodiment of that responsibility. He said his first obligation was to his employees, then his community, and then his shareholders. He was also a man of deep Catholic faith and a generous philanthropist, supporting charitable and educational institutions across Florida.

Alfy often said that in America, anyone could succeed ''if you work hard and play by the rules.'' His life proved it. He lost nearly everything to a communist dictatorship, started again in Florida, and built a legacy through faith, family, hard work, and freedom.

Alfy is survived by his wife Raysa, his daughters Crista and Lillian, his stepdaughter Raissa, four siblings, five grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

The Fanjul family are in my prayers. May Alfy rest in peace.

HONORING TEXAS-24 HOMETOWN HERO SERGEANT FIRST CLASS ANGELO WINFIELD

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, Sergeant First Class Angelo Winfield, a Hurst native who honorably served our Nation for 22 years in the U.S. Army and Army Reserves, achieving the rank of E7/SFC before his retirement. During his time in the Army, he earned his degree and led to a career in the IT field.

After retirement, Angelo continued his career as an IT consultant in the Dallas area, running his own business, and donating network equipment to local nonprofits. He has always been dedicated to giving back to his community from serving on the executive board for a homeless shelter, to being a Big Brother mentor, and a foster parent.

He remains involved in our North Texas community by volunteering weekly at a local