

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE BOROUGH OF JESSUP'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY AND THE INAUGURAL JESSUP GROUNDHOG DAY

HON. ROBERT P. BRESNAHAN, JR.

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Mr. BRESNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following Proclamation honoring the 150th Anniversary of the Borough of Jessup and the Inaugural Jessup Groundhog Day.

Whereas, the Borough of Jessup proudly celebrates its 150th anniversary, honoring generations of families, neighbors, and volunteers who have built a strong and close-knit community; and

Whereas, community traditions bring people together, strengthen civic pride, and reflect the shared history and character that make Jessup a special place to call home; and

Whereas, today the Borough of Jessup celebrates the inaugural Jessup Groundhog Day at Station Park, marking the beginning of a new hometown tradition inspired by Pennsylvania folklore and shaped by local spirit; and

Whereas, today's celebration includes music, traditional attire, an official scroll reading, and the annual forecast delivered by Jessup's own prognosticator, Jessup Giuseppe, whose presence adds charm, creativity, and local character to this community gathering; and

Whereas, the event highlights the warmth, creativity, and togetherness of the Jessup community, giving neighbors and families of all ages the chance to connect, have fun, and share in the joy of this special anniversary year; and

Now therefore, I, ROB BRESNAHAN, Jr., Member of Congress, do hereby recognize and commend the organizers, volunteers, and community members who made the inaugural Jessup Groundhog Day possible. I am proud to celebrate this new tradition with the people of Jessup and to join in recognizing 150 years of community, history, and shared pride.

RECOGNIZING GARY BRAUNSCHEIDLE

HON. NICHOLAS A. LANGWORTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary dedication and service of Gary Braunscheidle, who has devoted 62 years to serving the Town of Pendleton and the Wendelville Volunteer Fire Company. Over the course of his long and distinguished career, Gary has responded to over 200 emergencies in the past year alone, demonstrating his unwavering commitment to public safety.

Gary has held multiple roles within the company, including Assistant Chief and company

mechanic, and has been a cornerstone of the social and fundraising efforts that support the Wendelville Volunteer Fire Company. He has played a vital role in events such as making chowder, managing the kitchen for the Gun Raffle, assisting with Fire Prevention, and supporting Company Field Days and the Harvest Moon 5K.

Gary's guidance, leadership, and readiness to help in any capacity have made him an indispensable member of the Wendelville Volunteer Fire Company.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the United States House of Representatives join me in honoring Gary Braunscheidle for his remarkable 62 years of service and in wishing him continued success and fulfillment in his ongoing commitment to the community.

HONORING MRS. BESSIE LEE BELTON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Bessie Lee Belton, a dedicated public servant and Hazlehurst native.

Mrs. Belton was born on April 15, 1949, and lived in the Brushy Creek Community. She has lived in Hazlehurst, Mississippi for 54 years and has two daughters, Denise and Latasha Belton.

In December of 2022, Mrs. Belton was diagnosed with Breast Cancer and began chemo in late 2023. Because of such progression, she did not have to undergo radiation and was immediately put on immunotherapy, which she completed in February of 2024.

Mrs. Belton is very passionate about helping others. She is a donor to the Salvation Army, she transports her friends to their doctor's appointments—free of charge, has previously donated to St. Jude, and enjoys fellowship with friends and church members every Wednesday and Sunday.

Mrs. Belton is a member of Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church, where she is an active member and cheerful giver, especially during Thanksgiving. Mrs. Belton believes that she survived Breast Cancer because she told God she would love and serve others due to his faithfulness, and she is doing just that.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Bessie Lee Belton for her continued service and dedication in her community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. JOSEPH CAMPBELL

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Joseph Campbell, a hard-

working and successful farmer, as well as a devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

Joe was a respected leader in agriculture, admired by many for his ambition, work ethic, and humble spirit. After graduating from Delano High School in 1960, he attended the College of the Sequoias before proudly serving two years in the U.S. Army. When he returned home, he married his wife, Jana, and together they raised three sons as Joe began his career in farming. He started with cotton and wheat, later moved into almonds, and ultimately found his passion in table grapes—leasing his first vineyard in 1986.

Colleagues remember Joe as an ambitious and visionary leader who helped shape the Central Valley's table grape industry. Early in his career he worked at a box company, and his strong work ethic quickly earned him a promotion to general manager. Under his leadership, the company expanded from packaging into growing table grapes—an ambitious step that became a turning point for both Joe's career and the industry itself. Joe's willingness to take risks opened the door to great success, and his legacy lives on through his work with Delano Farms, Four Star Fruit, and the California table grape industry as a whole. Joe is survived by his wife, three sons, and many grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in celebrating the life of Mr. Joseph Campbell, whose contributions have left a lasting impact on the table grape industry, the Central Valley, and the state of California.

RECOGNIZING RICK COTTON FOR A LIFETIME OF LEADERSHIP

HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service and enduring legacy of Mr. Rick Cotton, one of the most impactful transportation leaders New York has ever known. His profound career reflects an unwavering commitment to public service, visionary leadership, and the belief that infrastructure can, and should, improve the lives of millions.

Mr. Cotton earned an Artium Baccalaureus from Harvard College and a Juris Doctorate from Yale Law School and served as a law clerk to Justice William J. Brennan Jr., on the Supreme Court of the United States. He brings a distinguished record of leadership across the private sector, public service, and international affairs. Mr. Cotton spent 25 years at NBC Universal, including 20 years as Executive Vice President and General Counsel, and later served four years as President and Managing Director of CNBC Europe. Earlier in his career, he served the federal government as Executive Secretary at the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and as Special Assistant for Renewable Energy at the United States Department of Energy. Across every role, he demonstrated a

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

rare ability to navigate complexity while keeping the public interest at the forefront.

Mr. Cotton later served as New York State's Special Counselor to the Governor for Interagency Initiatives, where he helped advance some of the state's most transformative infrastructure projects. These efforts included the redevelopment of LaGuardia and John F. Kennedy Airports, Moynihan Train Hall and the Penn Farley Complex, the new Tappan Zee Bridge, the expansion of the Javits Center, and the Second Avenue Subway. These projects not only modernized critical assets, but reshaped how New Yorkers move, work, and connect across the region.

In 2017, Mr. Cotton was appointed Executive Director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Under his leadership, the agency confronted some of the region's most complex infrastructure challenges and undertook one of the most ambitious capital programs in its history. This included a \$30 billion transformation of the region's major airports and the full reconstruction of the Midtown Bus Terminal, laying the foundation for world class transportation facilities built for the 21st Century.

More than the projects completed or milestones reached, Mr. Rick Cotton's legacy is reflected in the people he supported, the teams he strengthened, and the standard of professionalism he brought to work. His tenure will be remembered for its scale, its vision, and its lasting impact on generations to come.

TRUE COST OF BIG TECH

HON. JIMMY PATRONIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Mr. PATRONIS. Mr. Speaker, Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act insulates "Big Tech" from most liability for the digital fentanyl promoted on their sites. Time and time again, drugs are sold, sexually suggestive and/or explicit content is posted without consent, algorithms promote and normalize suicide and self-harm, and chatbots tell children how to cope with their emotions. All of these things are harming our vulnerable and impressionable youth. Chatbot usage is now so widespread that nearly three quarters of teens have used AI companions, and of these users approximately one in three have used them for social interactions and relationships to include the more than one in ten who sought emotional or mental health support.

That is why I proudly introduced H.R. 7045, the Promoting Responsible Online Technology and Ensuring Consumer Trust (PROTECT) Act, to immediately repeal Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act and to restore accountability for online platforms.

The question we must ask ourselves is: can there be any accountability when there is no liability. The answer is no. Without liability there is no accountability. When was the last time you saw revenge porn or fentanyl marketed on a billboard? The answer is you have not seen it because of a well-crafted system that punishes wrongdoing. Why do we see this content online constantly? The answer is Section 230.

Let us stop pretending like the internet is new, novel, and worthy of special treatment

when 96 percent Americans access it. When the law passed in 1996, the internet was in its early days long before the average American spent nearly half the month online and nearly one in six sales occurred online. Congress can no longer ignore the fact that the average American spends nearly 60,000 percent more time online than during the year of the law's passage.

To be clear, this law lets the large companies that dominate the areas where Americans spend almost half their time generally face no consequences for the content these platforms share, actively promote, and generate billions from. Worse yet, the law also deprives states of the power to protect their own citizens through state law. I am deeply troubled by alarming national trends and the proliferation of AI chatbots, providing advice to our children. Increasingly, children have been suffering, and parents have been unable to pursue an effective means of encouraging the industry to police itself.

Sadly, one in five children receive an unwanted sexual solicitation annually online. Despite Section 230 continuing to insulate online predation, I am proud of the work multiple sheriff offices, as well as state and federal agencies did to arrest 13 suspects during an online child sexual predator operation in my district and in surrounding communities last fall.

Imagine how much more "Big Tech" would be willing to do to shut down the predator superhighway if they faced actual consequences. While I could fill hundreds of pages with stories about how social media is harming our youth and supplement it daily, I want to focus on stories from my district and my home state of Florida.

As a successful Section 230 defense often results in the court granting dismissal early in the litigation, the facts are often accepted as plead. In these instances, the excerpts below reflect the claims as plead by the victims and their families.

ONLY FANS PARENT COMPANY FACES NO LIABILITY FOR ALLEGEDLY PROFITING OFF RAPE OF A MIAMI TEENAGER

In April 2022, Michelson Romelus and Bendjy Charles allegedly filmed each other on video while they forcible raped and sodomized the teenage victim in Miami. Several weeks later, the footage was allegedly edited and uploaded to OnlyFans.com where the footage was allegedly sold as part of a monthly subscription. Despite these facts, the case was recommended for dismissal based on Section 230, meaning the alleged victim could not recover from the platform.

OMEGLE IMMUNE FROM LIABILITY FOR ALLEGEDLY CONNECTING A MINOR WITH A PREDATOR WHO COERCED AN 11-YEAR-OLD INTO UNDRRESSING

On March 31, 2020, an 11-year-old girl and user of the Omegle platform, which allowed users to connect with people randomly and anonymously allegedly connected the child with a predator. This predator allegedly informed the victim that he knew where she lived and provided specific details about where she lived to prove it. He allegedly threatened to hack the victim and her family's devices if she did not disrobe and comply with his demands. The predator allegedly filmed the incident. The case was dismissed by the Court as the victim's family "failed to plead claims that withstand Omegle's Section 230 immunity." The platform has since ceased operations.

OFFERUP FOUND NOT LIABLE FOR ALLEGEDLY CONNECTING BUYER WITH SELLER WHO ROBBED AND SHOT BUYER

On June 13, 2018, the victim allegedly arranged to meet with the seller in Palmetto, Florida to consummate the contemplated sale of goods. The meeting was allegedly setup in response to a post on the OfferUp platform. When the victim arrived, he was allegedly robbed and shot multiple times. The Court concluded that Section 230 barred the claim against OfferUp.

CRAIGSLIST FACES NO ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ALLEGEDLY FACILITATING SEX TRAFFICKING OF A 15-YEAR-OLD

Back in 2008, a then fifteen-year-old girl began to allegedly be forcibly trafficked for commercial sex, which allegedly continued for a decade across Miami-Dade County. She was allegedly frequently expected to perform commercial sexual acts for between eleven and fourteen different men daily. The traffickers allegedly used craigslist's "erotic services", "adult services", "massage services", "casual encounters", and "personals" categories to display their posts and to send emails on the platform to negotiate commercial sex sales. Her traffickers allegedly posted sexually explicit, nude and partially nude photos as well as coded words to advertise commercial sex. At times, messages allegedly sent on the platform indicated that the victim was underage. To use their platform, the traffickers allegedly paid a fee to craigslist who never rejected or removed any posts.

Although the Court explained that "some of her allegations demonstrate craigslist's appalling lack of diligence in preventing trafficking, not a single one establishes that craigslist created or developed the trafficking content." After an extensive legal battle, the Court ultimately found craigslist not liable based on a Section 230 defense.

MOTHER WHOSE 11-YEAR-OLD SON WAS AN ALLEGED VICTIM OF SEXUAL BATTERY DENIED RELIEF AFTER A FOUR-YEAR FIGHT

Following an alleged sexual assault of legal guardian's 11-year-old son and two other minor males in 1994, Richard Lee Russell was criminally convicted for events relating to those alleged in the complaint. This sexual predator under Florida Law allegedly solicited the sale of the photographs and video of this assault in America Online, Inc., chat rooms. Ultimately, this case was appealed all the way to the Florida Supreme Court. The mother was denied civil relief from America Online, Inc., after the Court found Section 230 preempted Florida law.

EMERGING THREAT OF AI CHATBOTS

Beyond platforms serving as a predator superhighway, today's parents must contend with AI chatbots that are grooming children and pretending to be licensed therapists. For example, a 14-year-old boy, after allegedly prolonged conversations with an AI chatbot, tragically ended his life near Orlando, Florida. His brave mother recently testified in the Senate Judiciary Committee that the company Character Technologies, Inc., would not disclose to her many of her child's last words. Imagine a parent not being allowed to know what was going on through her child's mind in his final minutes.

For all these reasons, Congress must swiftly pass the PROTECT Act to keep our children safe and to restore accountability to the internet.