

1979. Following his years of service in the military, Dick returned to Bakersfield where he dedicated 27 years to Taylor Tire & Brake, his family's local business. During this time, he was named Director of the California State Tire Dealers Association, as well as both President and General Manager of Taylor Tire & Brake.

After his time with Taylor Tire & Brake, he continued his service to Kern County, working six years as a field representative for Kern County District Supervisor Mike Maggard and, in 2012, becoming director of the Kern County Veterans Service Department. In the years following, he served in several leadership positions with the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers, served briefly as an Honorary Commander at Edwards Air Force Base, and retired in 2018 as the county veterans' services officer.

Dick's lifelong commitment to Kern County is also visible through his work with local groups, serving as a liaison representative for the Devil Pups Youth Program, a board member for the Bakersfield National Cemetery Support Committee, and a tour leader for Tejon Ranch Conservancy along with numerous other volunteer and community service efforts. Notably, he and his wife Cheryl volunteered their time escorting World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam veterans to Washington, DC on seven 'Honor Flight Kern County' flights, and helped establish the "Kern County Line, Where We Honor Veterans" signs installed in 14 locations along federal and state highways.

Though much of their time is dedicated to others, Dick and Cheryl have built a life in the Central Valley centered on family, raising their children Maxwell and Shellie, and celebrating four grandchildren Jared, Kamryn, Brody, and Kellan.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing and honoring Dick Taylor on his 71st birthday, in appreciation for his lifelong service, leadership, and dedication to the people of Kern County.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF ALAN ABBS

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 21, 2026

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues Congresswoman NANCY PELOSI, Congressman JARED HUFFMAN, and Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN to recognize the service of Alan Abbs upon his retirement from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

Alan has worked throughout his career to improve air quality and public health in California. As the Legislative Officer for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Alan has been a strong advocate for strengthened air quality policies and investments to improve the health of our community.

Throughout his career, Alan has shown his steadfast commitment to service and has worked tirelessly to strengthen California's existing environmental laws and advocate for critical new programs. Prior to joining the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Alan served as an officer in the U.S. Navy, Execu-

tive Director of the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, and as an Air Pollution Control Officer for multiple counties. He helped lead the charge to establish the Wildfire Smoke Clean Air Centers for the Vulnerable Populations Incentive Pilot Program, providing funding to retrofit public ventilation systems and other infrastructure to prepare for smoke events. Alan also worked on behalf of the Bay Area Air District to strengthen statewide statutory penalties for air quality violations, culminating in legislation that provides additional incentives for groups that prioritize safety and public health. Beyond his work to advance air quality protections, Alan has been a strong supporter of other environmental policies. He supported the expansion of the Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies Program, which protected marine life and promoted sustainable shipping along the California coast.

Alan championed pollution reduction efforts at the federal level, as well. He testified before the House Science Committee on the importance of reducing auto emissions, utilizing his expertise to provide a framework for federal legislation. He was also a fierce advocate for the Clean Corridors Act, a bill I introduced that led to important funding for cleaner fueling and charging infrastructure across the Nation.

Beyond his professional achievements, Alan is also an accomplished runner, regularly running 50- and 100-mile races alongside his wife, Beverly. He is also a long-suffering Detroit Tigers baseball fan.

Alan's leadership has been integral to preserving clean air in California and beyond. Please join us in honoring Alan for his outstanding leadership and congratulating him on his well-deserved retirement.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN WALTER HARRISON SIGAFOOS, III

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 21, 2026

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of a remarkable American, Captain Walter Harrison Sigafoos, III, whose courage and sacrifice have left an enduring mark on our Nation.

Born on August 29, 1946, in Richboro, Pennsylvania, Walter Sigafoos answered the call to serve his country at a young age. He attended the United States Air Force Academy, where he graduated with the Class of 1968 with a degree in Astronautics. During his time at the Academy, he was named to the Superintendent's Merit List, served as president of the Ski Club, and participated in the Dance Committee. His classmates remember him as a young man who embraced both the discipline of military service and the fellowship of Academy life.

After graduation, Lieutenant Sigafoos continued his training in preparation for service as an Air Force combat aviator. He distinguished himself during his training and went on to complete F-4 Phantom combat crew training at George Air Force Base. His path ultimately took him to Southeast Asia, where he served with the 421st Tactical Fighter Squadron, 366th Tactical Fighter Wing, based at Da Nang Air Base, South Vietnam.

On April 25, 1971, Captain Sigafoos was serving as the weapons and systems officer

aboard an F-4D Phantom II during a nighttime reconnaissance and strike mission over Laos. Then came a transmission, ultimately becoming the last known radio contact with the aircraft.

The aircraft was subsequently presumed lost over Laos. Captain Sigafoos and his fellow crew member, Captain Jeffrey C. Lemon, were reported missing. More than five decades later, Captain Sigafoos remains unaccounted for. The Department of Defense continues to maintain his case among those of American service members lost in Southeast Asia.

Mr. Speaker, we will never forget the sacrifice of Captain Walter Harrison Sigafoos, III. Though decades have passed since he was lost in service to our Nation, his memory lives on through the loved ones who have carried his name, his story, and his legacy forward. Their remembrance ensures that his courage and devotion will not fade with time but will continue to inspire future generations of Americans to understand the meaning of service, sacrifice, and duty to country. We honor Captain Sigafoos by remembering the life he lived, the service he gave, and the enduring example he leaves for all who come after him.

HONORING SYBRINA FULTON

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 21, 2026

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as Chair of the U.S. Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys, on the occasion of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference, where we gathered to officially cut the ribbon for the Commission and to honor the memory of young Black boys who were murdered, and the parents who continue to carry their sons' legacies forward. It is in that spirit that I pay tribute to Sybrina Fulton, the mother of Trayvon Martin, whose advocacy in the years since her son's death has given comfort and community to countless mothers across this country.

Trayvon Martin was 17 years old when he was fatally shot in Sanford, Florida, in February 2012. In the aftermath, Sybrina did not have the benefit of an established community of mothers who understood exactly what she was carrying. So she built one. Alongside Tracy Martin, she co-founded the Trayvon Martin Foundation to raise awareness of gun violence and support families facing similar loss. From that same grief came the Circle of Mothers, an organization Sybrina created to bring together mothers who have lost children or family members to gun violence, offering them a space for healing, empowerment, and fellowship.

For more than a decade, the Circle of Mothers has hosted an annual retreat where grieving mothers gather not as strangers but as a family bound by shared loss. Sybrina has described the organization as something she dreamed into being because nothing like it existed when she needed it most. What began as one mother's search for connection has grown into a national network that has reached mothers far beyond South Florida, offering them what Sybrina herself was once without.

Sybrina has carried this mission into every space available to her, speaking to communities, students, and policymakers across the country about the toll of gun violence and the resilience required to survive it. She co-authored "Rest in Power: The Enduring Life of Trayvon Martin," bringing her family's story and her ongoing advocacy to an even wider audience, and she has continued to show up, year after year, for mothers who never asked to join this circle but found strength in it nonetheless.

Sybrina has often said that losing her son forced her to stand up rather than stay on her knees, and that spirit runs through everything the Circle of Mothers represents: turning unimaginable grief into a source of strength for others. Her willingness to keep opening that circle to new mothers, again and again, has made her one of the most enduring voices in this country's fight against gun violence.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Sybrina Fulton for her advocacy through the Circle of Mothers, and for the healing and hope she has extended to mothers across this Nation who have suffered as she has.

RECOGNIZING CESAR ALVAREZ

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 21, 2026

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my dear friend Cesar Alvarez, an outstanding leader in law, civic advocacy, and an inspiring member of my community. His longstanding commitment to justice and leadership in the Cuba-American community has culminated today in his recognition by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce in awarding him the "Sand in My Shoes Award."

Originally from Havana, Cuba, Cesar exemplifies what it means to pursue and live out the American dream. His father, Licinio Alvarez, played a pivotal role in his upbringing, both in making the decision to pursue a life in Miami and instilling the importance of hard work and community involvement. With these values driven into him at a young age, it is no surprise Cesar chose one of the most rigorous and demanding career paths available in our Nation: law. In 1973 Cesar began his life's work at Greenberg Traurig as an associate. Throughout his time at the firm, he has been involved in nationally recognized cases, taking Greenberg Traurig time and again to new heights.

Notably, Cesar has worked on cases that have significantly impacted the Cuban American community. During the Cuban Rafter Crisis in 1994, Cesar led a legal challenge against the government stance that Guantanamo was not U.S. territory. This involved seeking representation for those being detained and those that were denied asylum protection. This case served as essential legal precedent that influenced future policies regarding detainment at Guantanamo Bay, a reality which continues to this day.

Perhaps the most recognizable of these victories includes his work in bringing justice to the families of the "Brothers to the Rescue." This horrific attack in 1996 resulting in the death of four unarmed American pilots tore

through Miami's Cuban-American community; an attack perpetrated by the Castro regime in cold blood. Cuban MiGs shot down two aircraft operated by "Brothers to the Rescue," seeking to save the lives of countless Cuban men and women crossing the Straits of Florida and forced into exile by the Cuban regime. Alongside Frank Angones, Cesar fought for justice for the pilots through U.S. anti-terrorism laws. While successful in their heroic efforts, they encountered challenges upon attempting to collect the damages from the Cuban regime from the wrongful death suit, *Alejandro v. Republic of Cuba* 1999. This galvanized congressional action aiming to increase pressure for democratic change in Cuba, leading to the introduction and passage of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act in 1996, an act for which my dear brother Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart and close friend Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen each provided critical support. This marked a singular moment in history for the Cuban American community, and Cesar's contributions were monumental.

Similarly, Cesar played a pivotal role in the legal dispute between George W. Bush and Al Gore in 2000. He was contacted by Florida Governor Jeb Bush's legal team personally and ultimately approved of the firm's participation in this case. He worked to ensure Greenberg Traurig remained neutral and provided bipartisan representation. This case was essential in Greenberg Traurig's growth, opening the door for high profile cases, and placing them among other major players in the legal world.

In clear acknowledgment of his historic contributions, Cesar ascended to CEO and President of Greenberg Traurig in 1997, leading the firm from these to become an internationally recognized organization with thousands of attorneys. Today, the heart of the firm remains in Miami, with Cesar serving as Senior Chairman, where it not only provides its legal services but contributes to the community by providing leadership and financial support to numerous local and national charitable organizations. Whether in law or in service to our community, Cesar Alvarez remains a singular figure in our Cuban-American community.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize my close friend Cesar Alvarez. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring his remarkable career and achievements. His work has truly shaped the Miami community, and his leadership has left a significant impact.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF JANE GARCIA

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 21, 2026

Mr. DeSAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jane Garcia as she retires from La Clínica de La Raza.

Jane has worked tirelessly to serve the East Bay community through her role as the Chief Executive Officer of La Clínica. Since beginning her role in 1982, Jane has led La Clínica in providing culturally sensitive care to over 86,000 patients throughout the East Bay.

Jane has been a steadfast proponent for accessible, culturally competent, community-focused health care. She has helped thousands of patients in navigating the health care sys-

tem and has worked diligently to build La Clínica into what it is today. She fostered strong partnerships with providers like Kaiser Permanente, allowing La Clínica to reach underserved communities. Under her leadership, La Clínica has not only become a major asset to communities in need of accessible health care, but it also helps to enroll patients in Medicaid and other insurance programs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Jane facilitated programs at La Clínica that helped patients re-enroll in health care after their coverage had expired, delivered meals to families in quarantine, and helped people find resources so that they were able to keep their homes. Furthermore, in 1997 she took then-California Governor Pete Wilson's administration to court for defunding Medi-Cal prenatal care for undocumented immigrant women—and she won. She also serves on various boards such as The California Endowment, the Alameda Alliance for Health, and Oakland Thrives, and she served a remarkable three-year term as President of the California Primary Care Association. Through working on the ground with patients and navigating policy, she has been a fierce advocate for historically marginalized communities and has been a true leader in protecting and promoting public health throughout the Bay Area.

Jane's commitment to community health has earned her numerous awards, including the Equal Rights Advocates award, the YMCA Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Prize for Human Dignity and Brotherhood award, and the National Association of Community Health Centers 2010 Betsey Cooke Advocacy MVP Award. She has also been inducted into the Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame, as well as the Women's Hall of Fame by the Contra Costa Commission for Women, and was recognized as one of UC Berkeley's School of Public Health's 75 Influential Alumni.

Jane's leadership has been integral to providing quality health care to marginalized communities around the Bay Area, and her stellar commitment to service has left a lasting impact on countless individuals. Please join me in congratulating Jane Garcia on her retirement after her four decades of service to our region.

HONORING STEVE BASSETT FOR 60 YEARS OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO VIRGINIA MUSIC

HON. JENNIFER L. McCLELLAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 21, 2026

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Steve Bassett, an accomplished musician, songwriter and proud Virginian, who for 60 years has made extraordinary contributions to the Commonwealth's musical heritage.

For six decades, Steve has helped shape Virginia's musical heritage through his songwriting, performances and commitment to the arts. His career has taken him to stages across Virginia and beyond, sharing music that reflects the people, places and spirit of the Commonwealth.

Among Steve's most enduring contributions is "Sweet Virginia Breeze," which he co-wrote with Robbin Thompson. Beloved by generations of Virginians, the song celebrates the