

residents, educators, business leaders, first responders, public servants, city leadership, and staff who have helped shape Allen into the excellent example it is today.

As Allen has expanded in size and prominence, it has remained grounded in the values that have long defined its character: Texas toughness, hard work, civic pride, and a deep sense of unity. The city's sesquicentennial anniversary is not only an opportunity to honor its rich history, but to celebrate the bright future that lies ahead.

Allen's legacy continues to reflect the strength, promise, and spirit of north Texas. On behalf of Texas' Third Congressional District, I am honored to recognize the city of Allen on the occasion of its 150th anniversary and to extend best wishes as we celebrate this historic milestone.

RECOGNIZING 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF NORTH TEXAS MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

Mr. SELF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the North Texas Municipal Water District as it celebrates its 75th anniversary of service to the people of north Texas.

Founded in 1951 by civic leaders from 10 original member cities who understood that water would be the key to our region's future, the District has spent the last 75 years turning that vision into reality. What began as a partnership among a handful of communities has grown into a regional utility of 13 member cities and 34 customers serving more than 70 communities and over 2.4 million Texans across Collin County and beyond.

In Texas' Third Congressional District, I have witnessed firsthand the extraordinary growth of north Texas. Communities such as McKinney, Plano, Frisco, Allen, Wylie, Farmersville, and many others have become one of the fastest growing areas in America. Families and businesses continue to choose our region because of its opportunity, innovation, and quality of life.

However, growth does not happen on its own. It requires planning and the willingness to build for tomorrow. Every home, school, hospital, and business depends on reliable water infrastructure. Today, the North Texas Municipal Water District provides not only drinking water but also wastewater treatment and solid waste services that support communities across our vast region.

For 75 years, the District has demonstrated a commitment to the region through responsible stewardship, long-range planning, and investment in the infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of future generations. Its leadership has helped ensure that one of America's fastest growing regions has the resources to continue thriving.

On behalf of the people of Texas' Third Congressional District, I congratulate the North Texas Municipal Water District on this milestone anniversary and thank the men and women of the District past and present for 75 years of dedicated service.

HONORING LIFE AND LEGACY OF SPENCER LEAK, JR.

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, Representative JACKSON is going to stand with me, but this is not his 5 minutes. He is just standing with me.

I rise today to honor the life and extraordinary legacy of Spencer Leak, Jr., a devoted father, husband, son, brother, and faithful community leader whose service left a lasting mark on the Chicagoland area. Most of all, I am honored to have called him a friend and a constituent.

Spencer dedicated his life to serving the people of the Chicagoland area. He carried forward his family's proud legacy and business, Leak & Sons Funeral Home.

He pursued his education with purpose, graduating from Southern Illinois University with a degree in mortuary and funeral sciences and becoming a licensed director in 1989. However, his calling started long before that. Spencer began working at the family business at just 12 years old, answering phones and learning his trade. He rose to become vice president in 1993, carrying on a tradition of faithful, kind, and honest service to families in their most difficult moments.

As a third-generation funeral director, Spencer expanded the vision of his grandfather, Reverend Andrew Leak, so that Black people living in the Chicagoland area could lay their loved ones to rest with the dignity, respect, and care they deserved.

Mr. Speaker, Spencer's work reached far beyond his profession. He was an advocate for civil rights and justice, a trusted friend to leaders across our community, and a generous supporter of the causes that lifted up those in need. His commitment to service and to positivity never wavered. He mentored young Black men, partnered with organizations to empower residents, and stood as a true pillar to his community.

Spencer was a champion of the small, humble acts of kindness that so often go unseen. His devotion to a more just world was never in question, and through it all, he grew the Leak family legacy of making the Chicagoland community better and more loving. His love touched many. His generosity ran deep, and his service knew no bounds.

Above all, Spencer was an amazing husband, father, a kind son, a supportive brother, and a truly wonderful human being. His passing is deeply felt by his beloved wife, Dr. Donna Leak, who is in the gallery; his children, Spencer Leak III and Emma Leak; his parents, Spencer Leak, Sr., and Henrietta Leak; his siblings, Stephen and Stacy; his extended family; and the many friends and community members that mourn his loss.

On a personal level, I experienced Spencer's kindness on many levels, but most personal was when he handled my husband's funeral services almost 3 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the extraordinary legacy of Spencer Leak, Jr., and extending my deepest condolences to his family, friends, and all who were blessed to know him.

May his memory be a blessing. Rest in peace and power, my friend.

CELEBRATING 250 YEARS OF AMERICA

(Mr. MANN of Kansas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as we honor and prepare to celebrate 250 years of American independence.

Mr. Speaker, 250 years ago, our Founders declared to the world that our rights do not come from government nor do they come from a king. They come from our creator. They declared that government exists to protect liberty, to secure the rights of people, and to preserve a nation where free men and women could build lives, raise families, worship God, and pursue opportunity. That idea changed the course of human history.

As we approach America's 250th birthday, we ought to look back with gratitude, but we should also look forward with clarity. America's success was not an accident. We were blessed by God with extraordinary resources, but it was freedom that allowed the American people to turn those blessings into the most prosperous Nation in the history of the world.

I often think about it this way: America was dealt three aces. First, we were given the largest stretch of fertile farmland in the world, which runs right through Kansas and the district that I am blessed to represent. In the Big First District, agriculture is not just an industry, it is our way of life. Our farmers, ranchers, feedlot operators, ethanol producers, researchers, truckers, and small businesses all play a role in feeding, fueling, and clothing the world.

Second, running through that great patch of farmland is the largest navigable river system on the planet, the Mississippi River system. That river system gave American producers the ability to move goods, reach markets, trade with the world, and build an economy that went well beyond the county line, a State line, or even a coastline.

Third, and most importantly, America was founded on faith, freedom, private property rights, the rule of law, and limited government. Fertile soil alone does not create prosperity. A river alone does not create opportunity. Natural resources alone do not make a nation great. Freedom does.

It was freedom that allowed families to farm the land, own the land, improve the land, pass it down to the next generation, and build communities around it. It was freedom that allowed entrepreneurs to take risks, churches to strengthen communities, families to flourish, and citizens to govern themselves.

That is why America became the most prosperous and free Nation the world has ever known. One of the reasons we remain free is because we have never had to rely on another nation to feed us.

Food security is national security. A nation that cannot feed itself cannot long remain independent. For 250 years, American farmers and ranchers have helped secure our freedoms while our brave servicemen and -women defended them on the front lines. Farmers have kept grocery store shelves stocked, strengthened rural communities, supported our economy, and ensured that America never had to turn to our adversaries to sustain us.

In Kansas, we understand that well. The Big First is the most productive agriculture district in the country, ranking first in cattle, wheat, and sorghum production. We help feed, fuel, and clothe the world. We know when agriculture is strong, America is strong.

Our State has always had an outsized role in the American story. We are home to Abilene, where President Dwight D. Eisenhower learned the values that helped him lead the Allied Forces to victory in World War II and later to lead this Nation as our President. We are home to leaders like Senator Bob Dole, who carried the values of faith, service, sacrifice, and duty from the plains of Kansas to the battlefields of Europe and the Halls of Congress.

I like to think that the Big First District is the pilot light of America because the values that make our country great are still alive and well in my hometown and across Kansas. Folks where I am from live by faith, family, hard work, personal responsibility, and service to their neighbors. As long as those values continue to burn bright in America, our brightest days are yet to come. However, preserving those values requires us to be clear-eyed about the threats we have to freedom.

History scholars know there is an inverse relationship between the size of government and the freedom of the people. The larger and more intrusive government becomes, the smaller the space becomes for families, churches, businesses, farms, and individuals to flourish. That truth is just as important today as it was in 1776.

Yes, America was blessed with fertile land, mighty rivers, abundant resources, and a people willing to work, but it was freedom that allowed those blessings to become prosperity. It was faith that gave our Nation its moral foundation, and it was family that carried our values from one generation to the next.

As we celebrate America's 250th birthday, let us do more than look back. Let us recommit ourselves to the principles that made our Nation possible: faith, family, freedom, limited government, private property, strong communities, gratitude, and faith in God.

We must protect this inheritance, strengthen it in our time, and pass it on to our children and grandchildren so that 250 years from now, America remains prosperous, secure, free, and rooted in the truth that our rights are derived from God, not from a king.

Mr. Speaker, may God bless Kansas and may God bless the United States of America. Happy birthday, America.

HONORING BEATRICE LUMPKIN

(Mrs. RAMIREZ of Illinois was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and legacy of Beatrice Lumpkin, who passed away June 14, 2026, at the age of 107 years. Bea was the living, marching, fighting embodiment of solidarity forever.

Many of us know Bea because of her unwavering commitment to worker power, civil rights, and educational justice. A Chicago Public Schools educator and leader with the Chicago Teachers Union, Bea was a fixture at marches, rallies, and picket lines across our city.

She started her activism early. At the age of 9, she marched with striking textile workers. Across her century of activism, Bea was on the front lines of the struggle for justice and equity. From marching alongside Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in Marquette Park, to being instrumental in Harold Washington's campaign for mayor 43 years ago, to supporting the recent unionization of Starbucks employees, Bea showed up for her neighbors, for Chicago, and for our movement.

In 2018, my colleague, Representative JAN SCHAKOWSKY, took to the floor to celebrate Bea's 100 years of fighting for justice and inspiring generations of activism.

Today, I rise to thank Bea for reminding us that there is joy in the struggle, in solidarity, and on the front lines of the fight for justice because joy, in fact, is an act of resistance.

On behalf of Chicago's Third Congressional District, I honor the memory and the life's work of Beatrice Lumpkin, a true champion for the working class and a giant in our movement.

HONORING JAE JIN PAK AND TIMOTHEUS GORDON, JR.

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jae Jin Pak and Timotheus Gordon, Jr., two leaders who co-founded the Chicagoland Disabled People of Color Coalition and who serve as research associates at the Institute on Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois Chicago.

Throughout their careers, they have dedicated themselves to unifying disabled, autistic, deaf, and neurodivergent people of color, fostering collective pride, strengthening advocacy skills across our communities, and building intersectional solidarity.

Through the arts, culture, and relentless advocacy, they champion disability justice, advancing the principles of accessibility and radical inclusion within communities of color.

By cultivating brave spaces that center the lived experiences of disabled people of color, they dismantle systemic barriers to inclusion and empower individuals to forge their own path to reclaim their identities and their dignity.

They are the architects of a more inclusive, equitable Chicago.

On behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, it is my proud honor to be able to commend Jae Jin Pak and Timotheus Gordon, Jr., for their dedication to disability justice, radical inclusion, and the innate dignity of all people.

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RECOGNIZING SOVEREIGNTY FOR PUERTO RICO

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the Chicago Young Lords and their protests of 1969, the first marches for Puerto Rican self-determination in Chicago's history.

It is fitting that I honor a revolutionary organization fighting for Puerto Rican liberation and the rights of all oppressed people on the eve of our 250th anniversary of the United States of America. While America will declare its commitment to no kings, we also must demand no colonies.

That is because 57 years after the summer of 1969, 57 years after Jose Jimenez traveled to Puerto Rico to visit the shrine of its nationalist leader, Don Pedro Albizu Campos, 57 years after the Chicago Young Lords mobilized 10,000 people to march carrying Don Pedro Albizu Campos signs from Lincoln Park to Humboldt Park in support of independence in Chicago's Puerto Rican parade, Puerto Rico is still a United States colony.

We cannot celebrate 250 years of freedom while ruling a colony for 128 of them. We cannot celebrate our independence while denying the Puerto Rican people the dignity of self-determination.

That is why, here on behalf of Illinois' Third Congressional District, I publicly commend the Young Lords for teaching us that when we support Puerto Rico's self-determination, we are supporting, in fact, the right of sovereignty for people everywhere.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF CHIEF STEPHEN C. IGNACIO

(Mr. MOYLAN of Guam was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with a heavy heart to honor the life and legacy of Chief Stephen C. Ignacio, a son of Guam who dedicated his life to serving and protecting our island.

His passing is not only a profound loss for the Guam Police Department, but for the entire island of Guam.