HONORING SENATOR JIMMY HIGDON

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2026

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a true public servant, Kentucky State Senator Jimmy Higdon. His home is in Lebanon, Kentucky, where he was born on July 15, 1953.

Senator Higdon graduated from Marion County High School and Morehead State University. He served in the United State Army Reserves from 1976 to 1984. After college, Higdon returned to Lebanon and became a partner in Key Market grocery store, which later became Higdon's Foodtown. The store, a small independent grocery, closed in 2011.

Higdon was first elected to the Kentucky House of Representatives in 2002 to represent the 24th District. He served for 4 terms. He was then elected to the Kentucky Senate in a 2009 special election and was elected four more times in District 14. In the Senate, he served as chair of the Senate Veterans, Military Affairs, and Public Protection Committee and the Senate Transportation Committee. Senator Higdon was chosen by his colleagues as the Republican majority whip and as president pro tempore.

A well-respected leader, Senator Higdon is retiring from elected office at the end of his term in 2026 after 24 years of service to the people of Kentucky. He is a tremendous public servant and an inspiration to us all. I appreciate his dedication to the people that he represents in Frankfort and I wish him and his wife Jane a wonderful retirement. It is my honor to recognize Senator Jimmy Higdon before the United States Congress.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS F. BALISTRERI

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2026

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life and legacy of Thomas F. Balistreri of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who passed away on August 30, 2026, at the age of 86.

Born on December 12, 1939, and raised on Milwaukee's East Side in a close-knit Italian American community, Thomas Balistreri dedicated his life to two callings that would come to define him: service to our Nation and service to our children.

After graduating from Marquette University High School and earning his degree in Communications from St. Norbert College, where he was commissioned through Army ROTC, Thomas answered the call to serve his country. He served on active duty in the United States Army Signal Corps from 1962 to 1965, stationed with U.S. Army Headquarters Europe in Heidelberg, Germany.

Upon returning home to Milwaukee, Tom began a remarkable 37-year career with Milwaukee Public Schools, the district I am proud to represent. He began as a classroom teacher and rose to serve as principal of Bay View High School and, later, Rufus King High School, an International Baccalaureate school and one of the finest public high schools in our State. Under his leadership, Rufus King twice earned the U.S. Department of Education's National Blue Ribbon School Award and was recognized nationally, including a feature on NBC's Dateline. Tom was twice named Principal of the Year. He established Italian language instruction at Rufus King—the first of its kind in a Milwaukee high school—building a legacy of language education that continues to benefit Milwaukee students today. Following his retirement from the principal's office in 2001, Tom continued to serve our city's students as an At-Large member of the Milwaukee Board of School Directors.

Tom was a proud son of Milwaukee's Italian American community. He served as president of the Milwaukee Chapter of UNICO, sat on the Board of Directors of the Italian Community Center, and was a devoted member of St. Rita's Catholic Church. An advocate for his fellow veterans, he remained active in the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for many years he volunteered as a United States Naval Academy Blue and Gold Officer, helping guide young Wisconsinites toward futures in service to our country. He also served on my Service Academies Selection Board.

Above all, Tom was a beloved husband, father, and grandfather. He is survived by his wife, Barbara; his seven children, Thomas, Anthony, Maria, Andrew, Victoria, Christina, and Michael; his seven grandchildren; and his sister, Rose.

Tom's life was a testament to the power of uplifting others through selfless service, compassionate leadership, and an unwavering commitment to making a difference. Throughout every chapter of his life, he led with courage, humility, and a deep sense of responsibility to the greater good of his community and his nation. As principal, he understood that education was about more than what happened inside the classroom; it was about inspiring young people to recognize their potential and creating opportunities for every student to succeed. Through his leadership, he helped shape not only the communities he served, but also the futures of students, families, and educators whose lives he touched.

I am exceptionally grateful for the life Tom lived and the example he set. He leaves behind a lasting legacy that will be carried forward for generations, not only through the family he loved so dearly, but also through the countless lives that were changed by the opportunities he created, the doors he opened, the communities he strengthened, and the friends he stood by. Milwaukee is better because of him, and his spirit will continue to inspire all who were fortunate enough to know him, as well as future generations who will benefit from the lasting impact of his work.

Mr. Speaker, Thomas F. Balistreri gave his life to service—first in uniform, defending our Nation, and then in our classrooms, shaping generations of Milwaukee students. Our city, our schools, and our Nation are stronger because of his devotion. On behalf of the people of Wisconsin's 4th Congressional District, I extend my deepest condolences to the Balistreri family, and I ask my colleague to join me in honoring his memory and his extraordinary legacy of service.

HONORING LARRY ROBERT BOSTIC, JR. WITH THE RESILIENCE THROUGH SERVICE AWARD

HON. SHONTEL M. BROWN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2026

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Larry Robert Bostic, Jr. as a recipient of the Resilience Through Service Award and to honor his extraordinary perseverance, leadership, and continued dedication to improving the lives of veterans and individuals with disabilities.

Mr. Bostic served approximately six years on active duty in the United States Army from 1984 to 1990. Following his honorable discharge, he continued his commitment to public service through a distinguished career in law enforcement and federal investigations, serving as a police officer, detective, criminal investigator, and Supervisory Special Agent with several federal agencies.

In 2015, Mr. Bostic experienced a life-altering spinal cord injury that resulted in significant paralysis. Rather than allowing adversity to define his future, he demonstrated remarkable determination in his recovery and transformed his personal challenges into a renewed commitment to helping others facing similar circumstances.

Mr. Bostic became deeply involved with the Buckeye Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America, progressing from Board Member to Vice President, President, and ultimately National Director. Through his leadership, he has advocated for veterans with disabilities, mentored fellow veterans, and helped individuals navigate resources for adaptive equipment, accessible housing, and disability benefits.

His commitment extends to promoting accessibility and adaptive recreation. Through his involvement with the Americans with Disabilities Act Resource Group at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center and the Ohio THRIVE Through Tennis Foundation, he has helped individuals with disabilities regain confidence, independence, and opportunities for meaningful participation in their communities. He has also competed in wheelchair games, earning more than 70 medals, trophies, and plaques.

The Resilience Through Service Award honors veterans who demonstrate extraordinary perseverance in the face of adversity while continuing to serve and uplift others. Mr. Bostic embodies these ideals through his determination, compassion, and unwavering commitment to transforming personal challenges into opportunities for meaningful change.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Larry Robert Bostic, Jr. on receiving the Resilience Through Service Award and in thanking him for his service to our Nation, his remarkable resilience, and his continued dedication to empowering veterans and individuals with disabilities throughout Ohio.