

award from the Greater Celina Chamber of Commerce. I am pleased to recognize him today for a lifetime of public service and continued commitment to advancing our community and nation.

It is an honor to bestow Andy with the Patriot Award for his exceptional service to the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING BRIAN WISLER

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to recognize Mr. Brian Wisler on his well-earned retirement after 35 years.

Mr. Wisler was hired by the Central York School District in 1990 as an elementary physical education teacher—where he shortly after, in May of 1991 was the creator of the Central York School District Elementary Track meet—which was later renamed in honor of long-time principal Jefferey Fox (who supported the initiative), to the Jefferey Fox Track Meet. Starting with just five events the track meet has grown to now include myriad events including dozens of runs, javelin throws, long jump, long jump, tug of war, softball and foxtail throws and others—that sometimes feature entire classrooms on the field.

The incredible day of sportsmanship directed by Mr. Wisler has positively impacted thousands of students over the years—proving his dedication to the students of North Hills and Sinking Springs elementary schools. After 35 years of teaching and engaging students, and 33 track meets, Mr. Wisler's service sets the standard by which we should all be judged.

Mr. Speaker, I'm privileged and honored to recognize Mr. Brian Wisler on his retirement. I wish him and all his students Godspeed on their future adventures.

TRUMP'S FIRST 100 DAYS

SPEECH OF

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the challenges and burdens placed on Black Americans during the first 100 days of the Trump Administration. Donald Trump is undoing the progress African Americans have fought for, threatening justice, equality, and our democracy. His administration has cut jobs, programs, and services that help Black professionals, students, and business owners thrive. Mississippi's public universities invested over \$23 million in DEI programs that supported Black students, and now those programs are at risk. Donald Trump has also removed protections for minority-owned businesses, weakened civil rights enforcement, and cut funding for public health research, all while costs rise. More than 664,000 Mississippians are at risk of losing Medicaid. Black families, already facing chronic illness and poor healthcare access, will bear the full burden. Head Start, which serves nearly

20,000 children in Mississippi, is also in danger. Black children, who already face significant barriers to education, will be hit the hardest. These cuts cause actual harm and send the message that Black lives and futures don't matter. We deserve leadership that sees, hears, and fights for us. And we won't stop demanding it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ABRAHAM J. HAMADEH

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, due to unavoidable scheduling conflicts related to critical constituent matters, I was unable to cast my vote on Monday, May 5, 2025. The well-being of our veterans and the security of our Nation against foreign adversaries remain top priorities of mine. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 115 (H.R. 530—ACES Act); and YEA on Roll Call No. 116 (H.R. 36—MEGOBARI Act).

HONORING THE LIFE OF JEROME PRESTON OWENS, JR.

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Jerome Preston Owens, Jr., who passed away on Monday, April 21, 2025, at the age of 85.

Jerome was born on June 28, 1939, in Jasper, Texas to Reverend Jerome Preston, Sr. and Louise Nichols Owens. He graduated as Valedictorian of his class in Jena, Louisiana, where his father was the pastor of the First Baptist Church. Upon graduating, he received a football scholarship to play for Louisiana College. Jerome then patriotically served our country in the United States Marine Corps from 1960 to 1963.

His father served as pastor for the First Baptist Church in Nederland, Texas, which is where Jerome met Marilyn Fraser, the love of his life. In 1965, Jerome's father officiated their marriage and they began their lives together. Jerome and Marilyn were married for almost 60 years and were blessed with two daughters named Stacey and Sharla.

He earned his Juris Doctor degree in 1969 from Baylor School of Law. While studying at Baylor, he was actively involved in the collegiate community, serving as a member of Alpha Chi and Senior Class President. Jerome practiced as an attorney specializing in corporate law for Coastal Corporation in Corpus Christi and Houston, Texas, where he traveled extensively. Jerome's primary devotion throughout life was for his family. His young daughter's drawing of him holding his suitcase inspired him to relocate to a smaller community to have more time with his family. He chose to move to Woodville, Texas where he established his own law practice and raised cattle with his father.

Truly a man with a commitment to serve others and seeking to make a difference in the community, Jerome served as County Judge

of Tyler County for 17 years. He then served as a Texas State District Judge and a Texas Senior Judge. Jerome continued to faithfully serve his community by being a deacon and trustee of the First Baptist Church of Woodville. After moving to Houston, he became a deacon at Second Baptist Church in Kingwood, Texas.

He received many awards recognizing his dedication to public service. Jerome was named the "Ralph W. Steen Memorial East Texan of the Year," and "Tyler County Citizen of the Year." For his leadership and skills, he received the "Award for Excellence in Community Service," and the "American Home-town Leadership Award." Jerome was appointed by Governor Rick Perry to chair the Texas State Community Development Review Committee. Additionally, he served on the board of trustees for East Texas Baptist University, board of directors for the Tyler County Hospital, served as president for Deep East Texas Council of Governments, president for Deep East Texas County Commissioners and Judges Association, the Tyler County Bar Association, and fellow at the Texas Bar Association. He was also a member of the American Legion.

Jerome is remembered as "one who loved his family and friends, for his deep commitment to God, his unwavering integrity, his eloquent speeches, deep wisdom, quick wit, humor and belowing infectious laugh." Jerome was highly esteemed and adored by his family and community. His family has said, "He was an all-around kind of man, one that loved sports, southern food, current events and a good joke. He was well versed in politics and had an answer for any question asked of him." He served diligently, was a loving husband, father, and grandfather. Jerome was a lifetime friend and inspiration.

Jerome was preceded in death by his parents, Reverend Jerome Preston, Sr., and Louise Owens, and sister, Jane Owens Griffin. He is survived by his wife Marilyn Fraser Owens; daughter Stacy Owens Ekstein, son-in-law Chris Ekstein, daughter Dr. Sharla Owens Sundberg, son-in-law Dr. Eric Sundberg; grandchildren, Bella Frances Ekstein, Sophia Marilyn Ekstein, Savea Kenny Sundberg, Soren Jon Jerome Sundberg and Anders Owens Sundberg, sister, Diann Owens Dotson, brother-in-law Ray Dotson; brothers-in-law, Tom Fraser, III, and Ed Fraser, sister-in-law Jean Fraser; and many nephews and nieces.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor my dear friend, Jerome Owens, for his many years of faithful service to his community. My most sincere prayers remain with his family and friends during this difficult time.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, on May 5, 2025, I was unable to cast my vote on H.R. 530—ACES Act. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call Vote No. 115.