

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING ALVIN STIMAGE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated leader and community servant, Mr. Alvin Stimage, for his 34 years of outstanding service at the Vicksburg YMCA.

Mr. Stimage has been a pillar of the Vicksburg community, promoting fitness, well-being, and mentorship through his work at the YMCA. When the facility first acquired exercise equipment, Mr. Stimage became instrumental in training members on how to use the machines effectively, demonstrating his commitment to health and wellness.

Throughout his career, Mr. Stimage has worn many hats, from helping run the YMCA's childcare program and working in maintenance to serving as one of the organization's first personal trainers at the Vicksburg location. He currently serves as a personal trainer and the facility's night supervisor, roles through which he continues to positively impact countless lives.

Mr. Stimage's contributions extend far beyond physical fitness. He has been a mentor to young people, offering guidance and instilling values of respect and resilience. One example of his impactful mentorship involved a young man who was able to calmly and effectively handle a tense situation, crediting Mr. Stimage's influence for his ability to de-escalate the incident.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Mr. Alvin Stimage for his exemplary dedication to the Vicksburg YMCA and his unwavering commitment to bettering his community. His legacy of leadership and service will inspire generations to come.

CONGRATULATING MELISSA TAPANES

HON. CARLOS A. GIMENEZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. GIMENEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Melissa Tapanes on being named President of the Builders Association of South Florida.

Ms. Tapanes is an accomplished attorney who specializes in complex legislative and quasi-judicial matters. She has demonstrated a strong commitment to public service, holding leadership roles with the Miami Downtown Development Authority and numerous civic and legal organizations.

Her dedication to education and public policy began early, with an appointment by Governor Jeb Bush and her successful advocacy for the establishment of a public law school at Florida International University.

Throughout her career, Ms. Tapanes has earned prestigious honors, including the South Florida Business Journal's "40 Under 40" and Ford's "Mujeres Legendarias." She has been consistently recognized by The Legal 500, ranked in Chambers USA, and acknowledged by Super Lawyers and Florida Trend.

I look forward to working with Ms. Tapanes in her new role as President of the Builders Association of South Florida.

RECOGNIZING RHIENNA MCCLAIN FOR RECEIVING THE ATHENA INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rhienna McClain for receiving the ATHENA International Leadership Award. This award celebrates the leadership of women who create opportunities for other women. Ms. McClain exemplifies these qualities through her entrepreneurial vision and commitment to her community.

As the owner of the 1776 Restaurant in Crystal Lake, Ms. McClain has established a fine dining experience that prioritizes high-quality, gluten-free, and allergy-safe cuisine. Through her leadership, she has strengthened the local economy by fostering partnerships with local businesses and sourcing ingredients from Illinois farms. Her restaurant not only offers an upscale dining experience but also serves as a community space that brings people together.

In addition to her entrepreneurial accomplishments, Ms. McClain is deeply committed to her community. She previously served as the chairperson of Big Brothers Big Sisters of McHenry County, an organization that provides critical mentorship services to children, helping them develop the confidence they need to succeed. Since 2018, she has been a passionate advocate for the organization, opening doors of opportunity for countless young people. Furthermore, Ms. McClain has dedicated her time and expertise to various community development efforts, including serving on the Economic Development Committee of Crystal Lake, the McHenry County Department of Health, and the Gavers Community Cancer Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent Rhienna McClain, whose exceptional contributions have made a lasting impact on McHenry County. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating her on receiving the ATHENA International Leadership Award, a recognition that is truly well-deserved.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RESTROOM ACCESS ACT OF 2025

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Restroom Access Act of 2025, which would require a retail establishment to provide an individual who has a medical condition requiring immediate use of a restroom, such as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, access to an employee-only restroom when such an establishment does not have a public restroom. Individuals would be required to present a Department of Labor-issued identification card certifying that they have an eligible medical condition.

Individuals who have certain medical conditions need immediate access to a restroom. When public restrooms are not available, these individuals may experience uncomfortable or embarrassing situations. As long as there are no safety concerns, which this bill addresses, these individuals should be able to use an employee-only restroom.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

CHANGE OF COMMAND DANIEL RUSSELL

HON. AARON BEAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, rain or shine, turbulence or calm, the Red Lancer's Commanding Officer is always steady at the helm—because leadership doesn't come with an 'abort mission' button.

I rise today to congratulate Commander Daniel Russell on his promotion to Commanding Officer of Patrol Squadron VP-10 of the United States Navy, also known as the Red Lancers.

When it comes to leadership in the Navy, it's more than just a title. It is a calling, a duty, and a profound responsibility. It requires vision, dedication, and commitment to those who serve. Commander Russell has already demonstrated these qualities in abundance, serving with distinction as Executive Officer, guiding this squadron with a steady hand and an unwavering focus on operational excellence.

A native of Troy, North Carolina, Commander Russell is a graduate of East Carolina University, where he earned a degree in the science of biology. He began his military career by enlisting in the United States Navy in 2005 and has since held numerous assignments, including on the USS *Maryland* (SSBN-738), USS *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74), and successfully completed two deployments.

Throughout his service, he has not only accumulated over 2,000 flight hours in various

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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

aircraft, but numerous military decorations, including the CAPT Tim Tibbets Leadership Award, six Navy Commendation Medals, as well as the Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

As he steps into the role of Commanding Officer, I know that Commander Russell will continue to execute vital maritime patrol and reconnaissance missions with precision and uphold the highest traditions of Naval Aviation.

Mr. Speaker, Commander Russell is a true patriot and distinguished American who has devoted himself to the service of our Nation. It is appropriate that we honor him today by expressing our gratitude for his dedication and wishing him well on his new command.

And while he may not be able to push the "abort mission" button, I know that when the pressure rises, Commander Russell will rise higher.

CELEBRATING THE 2024 HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. MAXWELL FROST

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Florida's 10th Congressional District, I want to recognize the exceptional Hispanic leaders of Florida's 10th congressional district who have shown outstanding dedication to the Hispanic community.

These individuals have worked tirelessly to uplift and empower our communities, contributing to the preservation and advancement of Hispanic culture, values, and traditions.

Their commitment to service and advocacy has had a profound impact on our community and beyond, their names are:

Yesica Ramirez
General Coordinator, The Farmworker Association of Florida
Tatiana Quiroga
Executive Director, Come Out With Pride, Inc.
Stephanie Loraine Piñero, MSW
Executive Director, Florida Access Network
Sonia Ledger
Former Local Group Lead, Moms Demand Action
Nancy Rosado, MSW
Community Advocate, UCF RESTORES and Alianza Center
Melissa Marantes, Esq.
Executive Director, Attorney, Orlando Center for Justice
Karla Radka
President and CEO, Senior Resource Alliance
Cyndia Morales Muñoz, Ed.D.
Senior Director, Hispanic Serving Institution Initiatives, University of Central Florida
Andrea Guzmán, Ed.D.
Vice President for Access and Community Engagement, University of Central Florida
Laudi Campo
Florida State Director, Hispanic Federation
William J. Diaz
Founder, Casa de Venezuela Orlando & Made in Venezuela Business Club
Marco Antonio Quiroga
Founder and Executive Director, Contigo Fund
Juan Pablo Santa Luna
Director of Strategic Business Development, Mills Gallery Arts and Multicultural Foundation

Juan Marcos Vilar
President and CEO, Alianza Center
Fernando I. Rivera, Ph.D.
Professor of Sociology and Director, Puerto Rico Research Hub, University of Central Florida
Felipe Sousa-Lazaballet
Executive Director, Hope Community Center
Eric Camarillo
President & Founder, SALT Outreach Inc.
Rev. Dr. David Maldonado
Bishop of Christ International Church and Co-Founder for Hablamos Español
Chief Charlie Salazar
Fire Chief, Orlando Fire Department
Rev. Dr. Jose Rodriguez
Rector, The Episcopal Churches of Christ the King and Jesus de Nazareth

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF BERNARD J. MCCULLOUGH

HON. JONATHAN L. JACKSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Bernard J. McCullough, better known as "Bernie Mac" by his fans. Born on the south side of Chicago on October 5, 1957, Bernie would go on to become a singular comedic talent who spent his entire career in show business, bringing laughter and joy to his audiences.

To his fans and a world that adored him, he was comedian Bernie Mac. But his real name was Bernard Jeffery McCullough born October 5, 1957 as the second child of Mary McCullough and Jeffery Harrison, who had already made their life transition. Bernard, or "Bernie", as he was affectionately named, grew up in the gang-ridden Englewood Community of Chicago. Always a leader and not a follower, he gained the respect of most of the gang members without ever joining. He was forever the clown and always known for making people laugh. He accepted Jesus Christ at a young age and attended Burning Bush Missionary Baptist Church.

His big break came in 1990 when he won first place with a remarkable performance in the Miller Lite Comedy Search. From that point, his popularity spread, and he garnered attention prompting Russell Simmons to give him a spot on his groundbreaking show Def Comedy Jam. Bernard's first stage appearance was so well received that he was invited back to perform a second time. From that moment on, the Mac Man was a phenomenon. He would soon go on tour as the opening act for Chaka Khan, Barry White, the Whispers and many other performers.

Bernie made his film debut with the release of *Mo' Money* in 1992. His breakthrough performance, however, came in his role as Pastor Cleaver in Ice Cube's hit movie, *Friday* (1995).

Bernie Mac's comedy was raw, honest, and fearless. His stand-up often revolved around his personal experiences, delivered with his signature raspy voice and bold stage presence. He gained widespread recognition as one of the four comedians in the 2000 stand-up film *The Original Kings of Comedy*, where his set stole the show with its hilarious takes on family and discipline. The Bernie Mac Show, his self-titled sitcom, was a groundbreaking hit, blending humor with heart-

felt moments as he played a fictionalized version of himself raising his sister's kids. The show earned multiple awards and cemented his place in TV history. Bernie transitioned seamlessly into acting, appearing in films like *Ocean's Eleven*, *Mr. 3000*, and *Guess Who*. His charisma made him stand out in every role he took on.

Even after his passing in 2008, Bernie Mac remains a beloved figure in comedy. His fearless approach and unique comedic style continue to influence comedians today, impacting hundreds of lives still. Bernie launched The Bernie Mac Foundation in Chicago, Illinois in 2005 as Founder and Chairman of the Board to bring awareness to sarcoidosis and build a bridge between awareness and a cure. He dedicated his mission to informing the community on the impact of sarcoidosis to patients and transform the opinions of treatment. Bernie used his celebrity to support the Bernie Mac Sarcoidosis Translational Advanced Research (STAR) Center at the University of Illinois Health Sciences System to provide patients with outstanding care. He was also passionate about patients receiving evaluations in a timely, compassionate and courteous manner for all forms of sarcoidosis.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the life and legacy of Bernard J. McCullough.

COMMEMORATING ARMED FORCES DAY AND THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVE IN THE UNITED STATES MILITARY

HON. NICHOLAS A. LANGWORTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the service of our brave men and women for Armed Forces Day, May 17, 2025. Armed Forces Day is a 75-year tradition to thank all of those who are currently serving, as well as those who have served and sacrificed to defend our freedom. It is because of their duty, honor, and courage that the United States of America remains free today.

This Saturday, the Western New York Armed Forces Committee will honor eleven service men and women to be honored at its 62nd Military Ball, and it is my honor to include in the RECORD their names as a tribute to their service, and the service of their brothers and sisters in arms:

RP2 Amber N. Cardillo—United States Navy.
LS1 Anthony Taylor—United States Navy Reserve.
SSG Jacob Hinds—United States Army.
SSG Andrew Sulski—United States Army Reserve.
SSG Kaleb Acosta—New York Army National Guard.
SSG Bradley A. Bray—New York Guard Honoree.
BMT Brett Lawrence—United States Coast Guard.
MST2 Krishnan Muthaiah—United States Coast Guard Reserve.
SSgt Favan G. Perez—United States Marine Corps.
Sgt Codey Aboff—United States Marine Corps Reserve Honoree.
SrA Tess E. Barone—United States Air Force.

Western New York and the Southern Tier are home to many proud service members and veterans, and our community has a long and proud tradition of military service. It is my honor to recognize their bravery. On behalf of the United States Congress and the constituents of New York's 23rd Congressional District, I thank these men and women for their service and all those who continue to serve with them.

RECOGNIZING THE CRYSTAL LAKE STRIKERS FOR RECEIVING THE CARL E. WEHDE AWARD

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Crystal Lake Strikers for receiving the Carl E. Wehde Award. This award honors the late Carl E. Wehde and celebrates outstanding contributions that enhance the quality of life for the people of Crystal Lake.

The Crystal Lake Strikers are a drumline that seamlessly integrates the arts and education. They perform year-round and offer a wide range of programs in percussion, color guard, and other performing arts disciplines. Their mission is twofold: to provide high-quality entertainment to the community and to build confidence in students. By expanding upon lessons taught in local schools, the Strikers meet the educational needs of Crystal Lake, offering percussion experiences for children at all grade levels through six distinct groups.

In recognition of their impact, the Strikers were previously honored with the Illinois Park and Recreation Association's Outstanding Program and Special Event Award for the creation of the Kingpins drumline, an educational program designed specifically for children with special needs.

The Strikers' commitment to serving the Crystal Lake community extends beyond the classroom. They actively support aspiring performers through college scholarships, fundraisers, and by providing a platform for young talent in the performing arts.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent the Crystal Lake Strikers, whose contributions to the arts and education have had a profound and lasting impact on the city. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Strikers on receiving this well-deserved award and for continuing to inspire the next generation of performers.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MR. PAUL ROGER DIONNE

HON. JARED F. GOLDEN

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. GOLDEN of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life of Paul Roger Dionne, who passed away on April 17, 2025. A pillar of the Lewiston community, Paul spent his life in service to others.

As a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, Paul earned two Bronze

Stars and two Vietnamese Crosses of Gallantry. After returning home, Paul met his best friend and soulmate, Diane (LeBlanc), and they married in 1970. Together, they built a home and raised two daughters, Melodie and Michelle, and later welcomed five grandchildren.

In addition to Paul's service to his country, he also served the people of Maine. Leading his community as Assistant District Attorney and as Mayor of Lewiston, Paul was instrumental in bringing the University of Maine system to Lewiston (UMLA). Later in his career, Paul was appointed Maine's first Executive Director of the Workers' Compensation Board, serving under Governors King and Baldacci. In this role Paul fought for workers' rights and is remembered for his compassion and tact.

However, Paul's greatest impact was on his beloved community of Lewiston. A staple at every community event, Paul was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, led the Central Maine Medical Center Board of Trustees, and earned recognition as one of Lewiston's Citizens of the Year. Additionally, Paul coached hundreds of students on the Lewiston High School Mock Trial Team, which he did proudly alongside his daughter.

Remembered by many for his big smile, and his love for one another, he lifted up his community. Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I am honored to pay tribute to Paul Dionne.

RECOGNIZING HANNAH DICKINSON, GOLD AWARD

HON. W. GREGORY STEUBE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. STEUBE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Hannah Dickinson. Hannah is a member of Sandy Beaches Service Unit within Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida, and has exemplified extraordinary leadership, innovative problem-solving, and a demonstrated commitment to making a lasting, positive impact, by earning the most prestigious award in Girl Scouting, the Gold Award.

Gold Award Girl Scouts are recognized as trailblazers who are willing to tackle the most pressing challenges facing their communities and the world with measurable, sustainable, and far-reaching results. To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, high school-age Girl Scouts must identify and investigate an issue they care about, devise a plan, and then lead a team of experts and community members to implement a project that produces lasting change. Over the course of 1–2 years, Gold Award Girl Scouts demonstrate significant initiative, commitment, and leadership, distinguishing them from their peers. Through their resourcefulness and perseverance, they embody the Girl Scout Law to truly make the world a better place.

Hannah's project, Kindness Counts, in partnership with Port Charlotte High School and the National Honor Society and Key Club, was an excellent endeavor to address mental health and bullying in our community. Hannah took action by coordinating with school administrators, educating community members about the harmful effects of bullying, and creating a motivational mural to be displayed at her

school, which will have a positive impact on our community for years to come.

On behalf of the 17th Congressional District of Florida, congratulations to Hannah for achieving the highest distinction in Girl Scouts, the Gold Award. We thank Hannah for her leadership and making such a positive, lasting change in our community.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT AND SERVICE OF GARY JOHNSON

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate Gary Johnson on his retirement following a distinguished career spanning more than four decades in engineering, construction, and public service. His legacy of leadership and service will continue to inspire us for years to come.

As Vice President of Government Affairs and Industry Relations for Granite Construction Company, Mr. Johnson has been a tireless advocate for infrastructure investment, sound regulatory policy, and industry collaboration. His leadership has helped shape national conversations around transportation, construction materials, and sustainable development. Before assuming this role, Mr. Johnson led strategic planning and aggregate resource development at Granite, applying his deep technical expertise to ensure responsible resource management.

Prior to joining Granite in 2002, Mr. Johnson held senior leadership roles with a nationwide engineering consulting firm, Mine Reclamation LLC, and the Santa Rosa Group Corporation. His diverse experience across public and private sectors underscores his commitment to advancing engineering innovation and environmental stewardship.

Mr. Johnson earned both his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin and is a Registered Professional Engineer in the state of Texas. Beyond his professional accomplishments, Gary holds an impressive record of public service, including his tenure as Chair of the Colorado River Region of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board from 2000 to 2006.

Throughout his career, Mr. Johnson has been known not only for his technical acumen and policy insight, but for his integrity, collaborative spirit, and unwavering dedication to building a better, more connected America.

On behalf of California's 8th Congressional District, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Gary Johnson on his well-deserved retirement. We wish him the very best in the years ahead.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 119; and YEA on Roll Call No. 120.

CELEBRATING OUR 2025 SPRING INTERN CLASS FOR THEIR SERVICE TO CALIFORNIA'S 20TH DISTRICT

HON. VINCE FONG

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding group of interns who have supported the work of the 20th District of California this spring. These bright and driven young people—serving in my Washington, D.C. office and my Bakersfield, California office—have brought a spirit of dedication and enthusiasm that enriched our team. At a time when many young Americans are questioning the role of public service, their eagerness to engage with the federal government on behalf of their communities offers real encouragement for the future of our Nation.

With their time in Congress reaching its close, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Jonathan Clark, Justin Gibbins, and Jack Putrino for their work in my Washington, D.C. office, and Ava Dykes for her service in my Bakersfield, California office. Their hard work and dedication have been invaluable, and I hope that the experiences gained here will serve them well in their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING NANCY MERKLING FOR RECEIVING THE ROBERT O. COVEY BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Nancy Merklings for receiving the Robert O. Covey Business of the Year Award. This award pays tribute to the late Robert O. Covey and celebrates businesses in the Crystal Lake area that have demonstrated outstanding success and community involvement.

As the owner and producer of Nancy Merklings Productions, Ms. Merklings offers professional photography and mentorship services, inspiring and guiding others who are pursuing careers in the field. Her vision and artistry distinguish her work in family portraits, headshots, and commercial photography.

Ms. Merklings has long demonstrated a deep commitment to the arts. She previously served as the Co-Executive Director of the Lakeside Legacy Foundation, an organization dedicated to preserving The Dole, a historic mansion in Crystal Lake, for the community to enjoy.

Since 2011, Ms. Merklings has been the driving force behind the 4th Fridays Art Event at The Dole, which brings together photography, art, and music to enrich the local cultural landscape. Held ten times a year, this program fosters collaboration among a diverse range of artists and provides a vibrant social space that celebrates creative expression. Through her vision, Ms. Merklings has significantly contributed to the cultural vitality of Crystal Lake, creating valuable opportunities for artists to share their work with the community.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent Nancy Merklings, whose dedication as both an artist

and a mentor has made a lasting impact on our community. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ms. Merklings on receiving this well-deserved recognition.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JASON CROW

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, on May 5, 2025, I was unable to be present to cast my vote on the MEGOBARI Act (H.R. 36) and the ACES Act (H.R. 530). Had I been present for Roll Call No. 115 and Roll Call No. 116, I would have voted "AYE" for both measures.

CELEBRATING 2025 BLACK HISTORY MONTH LUMINARIES

HON. MAXWELL FROST

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, Black History is American History.

The annual observance of Black History Month is more than a chronological account of our past, it is that of our present and our future.

It's about the joy, the culture, the resistance, the fight, and how far Black Americans have come in this country.

Celebrating our Black communities and Black history is so important, especially now, in times like this where values of diversity, equity and inclusion are under attack.

But despite that we move forward in the steps of our ancestors and in the steps of joy and resistance. That is why it is my honor to recognize the 2025 Black Luminaries of Florida's 10th Congressional District who have transformed lives and inspired generations, these luminaries are:

Dr. Laine Powell—Founder and Executive Director of Tech Sassy Girlz.

Ms. Eloise Abraham—Executive Director of Guardian Care Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

Lashea C. Reaves—Executive Director of 8 cent in a Jar.

Inez Long (posthumously)—Long-time President and CEO of the Black Business Investment Fund (BBIF) Florida, and co-founder of the African American Alliance of CDFI CEOs.

Dr. Jeffrey Redding—2019 winner of the prestigious Grammy award, The Music Educator Award and a UCF Director of Choral Activities.

Mr. Omari Jones—Boxing Bronze medalist from the 2024 Olympics.

Alvin Cowans—President/CEO at McCoy Federal Credit Union.

Gene Martin—Founder & Executive Director—Route 7.

Retired Elder/Reverend Henry L. Postell, II.—Owner of Postell Mortuary.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF OCOEE

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize and celebrate the 100 Year Anniversary of the City of Ocoee, Florida. Ocoee officially became a municipality in 1923 and was incorporated as a city in May 1925. The City of Ocoee will host their Centennial Celebration on Friday, May 9, 2025.

Ocoee was first settled in the mid-1800s, near Starke Lake, southeast of Lake Apopka. In 1886, Dr. H.K. Clarke, Charles J. Chunn, and R.B.F. Roper developed the Town of Ocoee subdivision, naming it after the Ocoee River in Tennessee. The name "Ocoee" comes from the Cherokee word for "apricot vine," which is what inspired the city's logo now referred to as the passion flower.

Over the past century, the City of Ocoee has become steeped in rich history made up of significant moments and milestones. Generations have come and gone, each adding their own story to the fabric of Ocoee. Today, with a growing population, over 50,000 people currently call Ocoee home. The City of Ocoee prides itself on the quality of life it provides its citizens. Ocoee's unique location in the heart of Central Florida makes it a wonderful place to live, work and play.

The City of Ocoee will host their Centennial Celebration on Friday, May 9, 2025. I join our community in celebrating this momentous occasion. Happy Centennial, Ocoee.

CELEBRATING THE 74TH BIRTHDAY OF ERIC L. THOMPSON, SR.

HON. JONATHAN L. JACKSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 74th birthday of Eric L. Thompson, Sr. Born on April 3, 1951 in Chicago, Illinois. Eric has been a lifelong resident of Chicago and a beloved member of our community.

As a young man, Eric was inspired by the civil rights advocacy of his parents, who frequently worked with my father, Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. to advance civil rights through Operation Rainbow PUSH.

Eric attended Augustana College and later went on to start his own businesses, T&T Food Service, and Eridor Food Service, Inc., named in honor of his sons, Eric and Dorian. Through his hard work and keen business skills, Eric has grown his businesses into the preeminent food service providers in the Chicago area.

In addition to being an accomplished businessman, Eric is also known for his friendly spirit and kindness. To know Eric is to know a friend. As Eric looks back on 74 wonderful years, I hope he is able to rest on his laurels and enjoy celebrating his accomplishments with his family and friends. I wish him many more years of good health.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating this momentous occasion.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HENRY C. “HANK” JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker,
during the May 7, 2025 evening vote series on

H.R. 881, DHS Restrictions on Confucius Institutes and Chinese Entities of Concern Act, I unintentionally voted YEA on final passage. Had I been able to correct my vote, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 120.