

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING OSCAR ROBERTSON,
NBA ALL-STAR LEGEND AND SO-
CIAL ACTIVIST

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of Oscar Robertson, who will be honored in Indianapolis for the 2024 National Basketball Association All-Star Game.

Basketball legend Oscar Robertson, affectionately known as the “Big O,” is well-known for his unparalleled athletic skills, versatility, and impressive career. He is equally respected as a trailblazer who helped pave the way for Americans facing racism, unfair institutions, and mistreatment in a segregated world, as he boldly revolutionized the sport of basketball.

Born in Tennessee but nurtured in Indianapolis, the achievements of his high school career at Crispus Attucks marked the beginning of a successful athletic journey. His NBA career spanned 14 years as a point guard. He was the first to win National College Player of the Year three times and was an Olympian at the 1960 Summer Olympics as co-captain of the U.S. Gold Medal team. He also received the NBA All-Star Most Valuable Player award three times, was an All-Star Player for 12 consecutive years, and was inducted into the Naismith Hall of Fame in 1980. During his career, he was the first to average a triple double for an entire season.

Mr. Robertson’s leadership had a lasting impact on and off the court, making his way in the world as an advocate and a humanitarian. An antitrust settlement while he was President of the NBA Players Association helped reform the free agency of NBA athletes through the Oscar Robertson Rule. He continues to be a force for change in policies that positively affect minorities and all Americans. If basketball is synonymous with Indiana, then Mr. Robertson has an undeniable place in our state’s history. Mr. Robertson is recognized as a gentleman of his day, one who achieved great things with strategic actions and diplomacy.

Today, as we celebrate Black History Month, and as Hoosiers celebrate the NBA All-Star Game in Indianapolis, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Oscar Robertson for his athleticism and advocacy. His legacy endures in the NBA and Indianapolis, both forever changed because of his contributions, and his enduring fight for civil rights for all.

RECOGNIZING WILLIAM HENRY
HAMILTON

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and service of

Mr. William Henry Hamilton, a member of the Missionary Generation (born between 1860 and 1882) and a true American hero. A proud African-American soldier, he fought for this country a generation post-enslavement, and the signing of the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation.

William Henry Hamilton was born in Trenton, Tennessee on October 25, 1875. Later, and while living in Little Rock, Arkansas, he enlisted in the United States Army on February 20, 1895. Mr. Hamilton was a revered Buffalo Soldier and a member of the esteemed Troop D, 10th Cavalry, one of only four (9th Cavalry, 10th Cavalry, 24th Infantry, and the 25th Infantry) African-American troops that served during the Spanish-American War in 1898. Under the overall command of General John J. Pershing and direct command of Captain John Bigelow, Jr., First Sergeant Hamilton—a “Rough Rider”—fought alongside Colonel Teddy Roosevelt (before he became Vice President and President of the United States) and other “Rough Riders” in the Battle of San Juan Hill, in Santiago, Cuba.

Following The Treaty of Paris, which ended the Spanish-American War in December of 1898, First Sergeant Hamilton, along with his 10th Cavalry comrades, were sent to The Philippines in 1900 as reinforcements against the Filipino nationalists who were attacking soldiers of the 24th and 25th Infantry regiments.

In March of 1916, President Woodrow Wilson ordered troops—including the 10th Cavalry—to Mexico. Led by General John J. Pershing, First Sergeant Hamilton and other members of the cavalry’s goal was to capture Pancho Villa. Unfortunately, Villa alluded capture; after two years of pursuing him throughout Mexico, the troops returned to the United States.

Mr. Hamilton distinguished himself as an expert sharpshooter; he was recognized for his skills with the following medals: Distinguished Pistol Shot (1908); Expert Rifleman (1911–1915); Sharpshooter (1913–1914); and Pistol Expert (1915). In addition to his sharpshooting skills, First Sergeant Hamilton received medals and recognition for his unwavering service in the following wars: Army Occupation Military Government of Cuba (1898–1902); Spanish-American War (1898); and Mexican War Service (1911–1917).

First Sergeant William Henry Hamilton served his country in the U.S. Army for more than 20 years. He returned to private life and retired at the historic Old Soldiers Home in Washington, D.C. to live out his remaining days. He enjoyed being with his former unit friends, rocking on the porch, and sharing war stories. Mr. Hamilton was laid to rest in the historic cemetery on the grounds of the Old Soldiers Home.

I am deeply grateful for Mr. William Henry Hamilton’s lifetime of military service to this country. His dedicated service, as well as the military service of his descendants that continues to this day, will never be forgotten. We, as a Nation, are forever grateful.

RECOGNIZING PETE CARROLL’S
LEGACY

HON. PRAMILA JAYAPAL

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pete Carroll’s contributions to the Seattle Seahawks and the people of Seattle during his 14-year tenure as head coach. Throughout his tenure, the Seahawks had a 137–89–1 regular season record, 10 playoff appearances and a Super Bowl XLVIII victory to conclude the unforgettable 2013 season.

Coach Carroll prioritized a positive team culture that he described as “. . . trying to help people find their best, one person at a time.” His exemplary leadership philosophy has been referenced and used to develop mindset training for Air Force cadets and for companies throughout Washington State. I would also like to commend Coach Carroll’s service to the Pacific Northwest through his Amplify Voices initiative and philanthropic efforts.

Coach Carroll is the winningest coach in the history of the Seattle Seahawks and has made a significant impact in our community—both on and off the field—over the past 14 years. On behalf of Washington’s 7th Congressional District, I would like to recognize Pete Carroll’s work as head coach of the Seattle Seahawks and his many accomplishments.

HONORING SENATOR JEAN
CARNAHAN

HON. CORI BUSH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Ms. BUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with the people of St. Louis, to honor the life and legacy of former First Lady of Missouri and United States Senator Jean Carnahan. Jean Carnahan was an exemplary public servant, wife, and mother who dedicated her life to the people of Missouri.

She was appointed as Missouri’s first female senator in the face of great personal tragedy after the loss of her son, Roger, and husband, Governor Mel Carnahan. Jean Carnahan was a trailblazer who showed courage and fortitude by choosing to step up and serve her community. She worked to hold corporate greed accountable, and as a member of the Senate Commerce Committee, she introduced and won passage of a law requiring corporations to make swift, electronic reporting of insider trading.

As First Lady of Missouri, she was an activist and advocate fighting for on-site daycare centers for working families, promoting childhood immunization, funding domestic abuse centers, and of course, the arts. She was passionate about making government accessible to the people of Missouri, starting with raising

• 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.

funds to restore the Governor's mansion, so that everyone could visit and enjoy the beautiful grounds.

Senator Jean Carnahan was an accomplished author of seven published books and co-wrote many of her husband's speeches. She provided guidance and inspiration to so many people throughout Missouri to serve others and be a vehicle for change. I offer my deepest condolences on behalf of Missouri's First District to the entire family and all those who loved her. May her Memory forever be a blessing.

HONORING BRIAN McDERMOTT

HON. BILL PASCARELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. PASCARELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize hero, leader, and lifelong resident of New Jersey, Mr. Brian McDermott. Brian is retiring from his position as Fire Chief of the great City of Paterson, bringing his two decades of service as a first responder to a close. It is a pleasure and a privilege to honor Brian and highlight his impressive career.

Brian's story begins in 1994. After deciding that college wasn't for him, Brian was looking for a way to combine his passion for helping others with his love of being on a team. Brian's brothers encouraged him to take the New Jersey Firefighter Exam and he scored exceptionally well. Within a year he was hired by the Paterson Fire Department.

It did not take long for Brian to display exceptional heroism. On March 10, 1997, he and his colleagues in Ladder Company 3 responded to a call, arriving to a building engulfed in flames and smoke. Despite the dangerous conditions, Brian and his fellow firefighter Matthew Ganci entered the building and were able to locate and rescue the people inside. On this call and on countless others, Brian proved his steadfast commitment to serving his community.

Over the years Brian rose through the ranks from Captain, to Deputy Chief and finally to Chief of the Department in 2018. Some of Brian's notable achievements as Chief include the implementation of a free smoke detector program for residents, the procurement of a fleet of electric vehicles for the Department, and the transition of the City's 9-1-1 network from an analog to a digital system.

Brian was able to achieve so much as Chief because, no matter the position, he led with humility. Always focusing on his team's achievements and never his own, Brian's reputation as a leader is well known across New Jersey. His work led to numerous regional leadership positions, including Deputy Fire Coordinator for Passaic County and Chairman of the Metro Urban Search and Rescue Strike Team.

The people of Paterson were lucky to have a dependable leader like Brian when we faced one of our biggest challenges in recent history: The COVID-19 Pandemic. Leading the Department while protecting his staff from a deadly and rapidly changing disease was no small feat. Yet, Brian valiantly rose to the occasion in protecting over 150,000 residents of Paterson.

Now, Brian will rise to the occasion once again. Retirement holds a lot for Brian: fur-

thering his education, contributing to the fire service profession, and traveling with his wife Shannon. It is with great sincerity and appreciation that I wish Brian a long and happy retirement.

So, from the bottom of my heart, and from the heart of our communities in Paterson and Passaic County, New Jersey, I take this opportunity from the People's House to thank Chief McDermott, and may God bless him.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. JOSEPH McDONALD OF THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES

HON. RYAN K. ZINKE

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to commend to the House the memory of Dr. Joseph McDonald of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) in Pablo, Montana.

Dr. McDonald died on December 14, 2023, at the age of 90. Dr. McDonald was an educator, innovator, historian, athlete, coach, tremendous leader, and dedicated family man.

Dr. McDonald was born in St. Ignatius, on March 31, 1933. He graduated from St. Ignatius High School in 1951. After high school, Joe worked as a U.S. Forest Service smokejumper in West Yellowstone. While working there he enrolled at Montana Western College and met the love of his life, Sharon Christopherson. They married at the end of their freshman year.

Joe went on to teach and coach at various K-12 schools across Montana. During this time, he also attended the University of Montana, earning his master's degrees in education and health and his Doctorate in Education.

While Joe and Sherri were raising their four children, Tim, Terry, Tracie, and Tom, he continued to serve his community in many capacities. Joe served as a high school principal and assistant superintendent at Ronan Public Schools. He was eventually elected to the CSKT Tribal Council and served two terms. His strong advocacy led to the establishment of Salish Kootenai College where he served as the President Emeritus for over 20 years.

Joe received a host of awards over his career including honorary degrees from Gonzaga University and Montana State University, distinguished alumni awards from the University of Montana and the University of Montana Western, distinguished service awards from the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, and the National Indian Educator of the Year award. Joe was also enshrined in the Montana Indian Athletic Hall of Fame.

After retiring from Salish Kootenai College, Joe spent much of his time supporting his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren in their pursuits in life with his wife Sherri.

Joe was preceded in death by his parents, his wife Sherri McDonald, and their son and daughter in-law Terry and Paula (Camel) McDonald. Joe is survived by his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, we are very grateful that great men like Joe McDonald have dedicated their lives to the service of others. On behalf of the

people of Montana's First Congressional District, I offer his family my deepest sympathies.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHANIE GADBOIS

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Stephanie Gadbois, a valued member of the House Committee on Appropriations, who has more than 20 years of service working in the federal government. Her commitment to our country exemplifies the hard work and commitment of an esteemed public servant.

Stephanie began her government career in 2001 when she joined the House Committee on Agriculture as Counsel. She was eventually promoted to Deputy Chief Counsel, and for good reason: In her seven years with the Agriculture Committee, she played a crucial role in the 2002 Farm Bill, 2008 Farm Bill, and countless other pieces of legislation that positively impacted the agricultural industry.

In 2008, Stephanie took her agricultural expertise to the House Committee on Appropriations, specifically the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. The next year, she moved to the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies. After returning to the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee for a short time in 2010, Stephanie became a Professional Staff Member on the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, where from 2010 to 2012 she oversaw accounts pertaining to the Department of Justice and related agencies including the United States Attorneys, the United States Marshals Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

After six years with the House Committee on Appropriations, Stephanie had the opportunity to serve as Senior Counsel for the House Committee on the Judiciary. From 2013 to 2019, she enabled better collaboration between the Appropriations and the Judiciary Committees and negotiated key pieces of legislation that reformed immigration law, addressed crime, and reduced regulatory burden.

At the beginning of the 116th Congress, Stephanie returned to the House Committee on Appropriations as Minority Clerk of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee. Stephanie's extensive expertise and experience earned her the position of Majority Clerk and Staff Director of the Subcommittee at the beginning of the 118th Congress.

Stephanie has been an exceptional member of the House Committee on Appropriations. During her time on the Committee, Stephanie has successfully implemented strategies for advancing key funding measures and policies through the Committee and Congress.

On the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, I tasked Stephanie with handling some of the most difficult issues. Similar to the roles she previously held, I knew she would exceed expectations. In times of divided government, her

ability to negotiate resulted in significant wins on many politically charged policies.

It is my distinct honor to recognize Stephanie as she leaves the halls of Congress and starts her next chapter. After countless early mornings and late nights of devoted work to our country, I know she is looking forward to a change of pace and scenery. I wish Stephanie and her husband, Aaron, who served in my personal office as a Military Fellow, the best in their next adventure.

Stephanie will be greatly missed, and I thank her for her dedicated service to the United States of America.

HONORING ADMIRAL BUDDY
YATES

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great American, Rear Admiral Earl "Buddy" Yates, Jr., who passed away peacefully on September 13, 2021, at the age of 97. A graduate of Reynolds High School in Winston-Salem, NC, Admiral Yates was admitted to the United States Naval Academy at the outset of World War II. He was commissioned from the Academy in 1943 at the age of 19 and was immediately assigned to the USS *Dyson* where his squadron received a Presidential Unit Citation for their actions during the Solomon Islands campaign in the Pacific Theater. After the war and throughout the 1950s, Admiral Yates served as a Naval Aviator in Executive Officer roles before being assigned to the Department of the Navy in Washington. In 1965, he was selected for his first command of the USS *Raleigh* where he was awarded a Legion of Merit for his service. In 1967, Admiral Yates assumed what would become a lifelong duty for him when he was named Prospective Commanding Officer of USS *John F. Kennedy* (CVA-67) while the aircraft carrier was completed at Newport News Shipyard in Virginia. He served as the ship's first commander upon commissioning, leading her through assignments with the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean until 1969. Before his retirement in 1974, Admiral Yates served in more senior roles with the Navy including Assistant Chief of Staff for the Pacific Fleet. While taking on other assignments with the Navy before his retirement, Admiral Yates was never far from the crew of CVA-67. As new commanding officers took the helm of the ship before it was decommissioned in 2007, Buddy was always available to support them. To the crew who served with him and the many who sailed on CVA-67 after his time in command, Admiral Yates was a friend and mentor who worked hard to unify them all behind a common mission. Throughout the construction of the new USS *John F. Kennedy*, CVN-79 that is expected to begin operations in 2025, Admiral Yates was quick to work closely with the new prospective commanders in building continuity between the two ships. He attended both the keel laying of CVN-79 in 2015 and the ship's christening in 2019. Together with the veterans of CVN-67, they formed a motto to carry CVN-79 around the world: "Two Ships, One JFK Family". Throughout his life, Buddy was never far from friends and was

blessed with a beautiful family. After he passed away in 2021, he joined his wife of 63 years, Lucy, in burial at the United States Naval Academy Cemetery. Buddy and Lucy had 5 children together, and many grandchildren whom they cherished. On December 23, 2023, his family, the retired crew of CVA-67, and the sailors of CVN-79 honored the centennial birthday of Admiral Yates. Admiral Yates leaves behind a legacy of service to others and of unwavering patriotism to our great Nation. May the memory of this distinguished American and his many years of service to our Nation be eternal.

HONORING THE BOROUGH OF
HAWTHORNE

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with immense pride and joy to recognize the Borough of Hawthorne as we celebrate its 125th anniversary. Since the city's incorporation in 1898, Hawthorne has evolved from a humble settlement into a vibrant and diverse suburban community that stands as a beacon of progress. This historic achievement is a testament to the resilience, growth, and unity that have defined the Borough of Hawthorne over the past century and a quarter.

The Lenni-Lenape Native Americans are the earliest recorded inhabitants of the area situated in the Borough of Hawthorne. By the 1700s, Dutch immigrants settled in the area as pioneers in agriculture. The history of the Dutch settlers and the Native Americans remains an active part of the shared fabric in the Borough of Hawthorne with roads and landmarks named after them.

The settlement emancipated itself from Manchester Township and incorporated as the Borough of Hawthorne following an act of the New Jersey Legislature on March 24, 1898.

Hawthorne attracted residents by promoting and establishing the municipal water system, electric grid with lit streets, and five public schools.

As one of the current 16 municipalities of Passaic County, the Borough of Hawthorne successfully voted for the mayor/council form of government. The borough is organized in four wards, providing a representative in each area of the community as well as giving residents the right to directly elect their mayor. The first election held under this new form was in 1989.

Today, there are nearly 20,000 residents that call the Borough of Hawthorne their home. The borough has a large immigrant population and is a melting pot evident through the array of multi-cultural businesses, restaurants, and community events. Throughout Hawthorne's history, community leaders and residents played a key role in shaping Hawthorne into the exceptional borough we celebrate today. One of Hawthorne's most notable figures is Mayor John V. Lane. His leadership and wisdom continue to guide the Borough of Hawthorne through all challenges, always emerging stronger.

The industrious spirit of Hawthorne's residents is the driving force behind its success. From the early days of farming to the present,

the people of Hawthorne have worked together to build a borough that fosters innovation, economic prosperity, and cultural diversity. Let us reflect on the rich history as we commemorate the quasiquicentennial anniversary of the Borough of Hawthorne.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, friends, family, and the residents of New Jersey in recognizing the 125th anniversary of the Borough of Hawthorne. I take this opportunity to congratulate the residents of Hawthorne on this historic milestone. May this celebration serve as a moment to honor the past, revel in the present, and look forward to a future filled with continued growth and prosperity.

CONGRATULATING BRUCE BROD,
MD, MCHI, FAAD ON HIS YEARS
OF SERVICE IN LEADERSHIP AT
THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
DERMATOLOGY ASSOCIATION

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the remarkable achievements and years of dedicated service of Dr. Bruce Brod, MD, MCHI, FAAD to the American Academy of Dermatology Association.

Dr. Brod's unwavering commitment to excellence and leadership within the AADA has made a lasting impact on both organization and the dermatological community at large.

For four years, Dr. Brod has served as the chair of the American Academy of Dermatology Association's Council on Government Affairs and Health Policy. In this pivotal role, he has demonstrated unparalleled dedication and expertise, ensuring that dermatologists and their patients are well-represented in matters concerning federal and state government affairs, health care policy, and practice-related activities. His visionary leadership has been instrumental in cultivating member engagement and promoting a culture of professional responsibility within our organization.

Prior to his tenure as Council chair, Dr. Brod served as Chair of the Academy's Congressional Policy Committee, where he played a vital role in shaping and implementing the Academy's federal legislative agenda. His tireless advocacy efforts have had a profound impact on the advancement of dermatological care and access to treatment for patients across the country.

Dr. Brod's contributions extend far beyond his leadership roles within the American Academy of Dermatology Association. He has held prestigious positions including as president of the Pennsylvania Academy of Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery, Philadelphia Dermatological Society, and the American Contact Dermatitis Society, showcasing his exemplary leadership and dedication to the field.

In recognition of his outstanding achievements, Dr. Brod has received numerous awards and accolades, including a Presidential Citation and Advocate of the Year Award, Dermatologist of the Year Award, Practitioner of the Year Award, Physician Safety Patient Hero Award, and Presidential Citation, among others. These accolades are

a testament to his unwavering commitment to excellence and his profound impact on the dermatological community.

Currently serving on the American Academy of Dermatology Association's Board of Directors, Dr. Brod continues to be a driving force in shaping the future of dermatological care and advancing the mission of our organization.

On behalf of the entire dermatological community, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Bruce Brod for his years of exemplary service, leadership, and dedication to the American Academy of Dermatology Association. I thank Dr. Brod for his unwavering commitment to excellence and congratulate him on this well-deserved recognition.

HONORING TERRY McFADDEN'S
CAREER IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM
AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO
THE SOUTH BEND COMMUNITY

HON. RUDY YAKYM III

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize and congratulate award-winning television journalist Terry McFadden, who is retiring from WNDU-TV this month after more than 40 years of covering news in the South Bend market.

A fellow South Bend native and Notre Dame graduate, Terry has called St. Joe County home his entire life. To this day, Terry still lives on the same street he grew up on. It is undoubtedly this love for the South Bend community that has made Terry such a trusted name in local news over all these years.

Terry made his start in broadcasting in 1982 as a news and sports reporter with WNDU. In the time since, Terry has become one of South Bend's favorite television journalists, and he has epitomized the highest standards of professional and journalistic integrity.

The various broadcast journalism awards and accolades he has received over the years—including the Radio Television Digital News Association's prestigious Edward R. Murrow Award—are a testament to Terry's many career accomplishments, commitment to the community, and his passion for his profession and presenting the news in a compelling way.

As he prepares to retire from journalism, spend more time with his family—especially his wife Laurie and their sons Michael, Sean, and Charlie—and write the next chapter of his life, I am proud to congratulate Terry on more than four decades of dedicated service and excellence in journalism.

While I will miss him bringing us the news every day, I join so many others in expressing our gratitude to this lifelong Hoosier and in wishing Terry best wishes for a very happy and full retirement. I thank Terry.

HONORING JERRI SUTTON OF
BEAUFORT

HON. GREGORY F. MURPHY

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Geraldine "Jerri" Mills Sutton of

Beaufort. Mrs. Sutton recently finished her time here on Earth. She was known for her dedication to others and her appreciation of the simple things in life.

Mrs. Sutton started off as a talented educator. She ascended to Senior Director for the Virginia Department of Education and was the youngest woman to assume this role. Her position led to working with the United Nations, traveling to developing countries, and helping improve educational outcomes for children.

Mrs. Sutton's dedication to the people of Eastern North Carolina eventually led her home to Greenville where she focused on improving her hometown community. All who knew her can attest to her unwavering devotion to the historical preservation of Eastern North Carolina. She led the restoration efforts of the Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church, which was set ablaze during the Civil War.

After relocating to Beaufort, she immersed herself in the Town's rich maritime history and culture. She became a founding trustee of the Maritime Heritage Foundation and served as the President for five years. She also won the Volunteer of the Year award in 2015 from the Beaufort Historical Association. Her passion and fantastic fundraising prowess led to securing \$1.5 million from small and big donors and the North Carolina General Assembly to build the North Carolina Maritime Museum on the Gallants Channel.

As all can see, Mrs. Sutton was especially attentive to the people and places she loved. I hope we can all learn from her legacy and do more for the people and places around us. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring this incredible woman.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF
DANIEL FREDERIC PACKER, JR.

HON. TROY A. CARTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, today, I stand to honor the life of Daniel Frederic Packer, Jr., who was born December 8, 1947, in Mobile, Alabama and peacefully transitioned to be with the Lord surrounded by his wife, children and grandchildren on January 31, 2024. Dan was preceded in death by his parents, Daniel F. Packer, Sr., and Algie Ervin Packer; his sister, Debra Packer Albright; and his first wife, Carlene Banks Packer. He is survived by his loving wife, Catherine August Packer, and devoted children, Timothy Packer (Nicole), Vanice Packer Zenon (Alfred), Randall Ross (Natasha), Dr. Reginald Ross (Leslie), and Maria Michelle Ross Burke. He was the loving grandfather of nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Dan learned the value of hard work at an early age. Dan was raised in a hard-working household along with his younger sister, Debra. During the summer, he joined his cousins on a family farm where he did everything from churning butter to grinding corn. "Work was never something we were afraid of," Packer told New Orleans City Business. Packer inherited a strong sense of self and a strong work ethic from his parents. Like most of the South during Packer's childhood, Alabama was segregated, but his mother's motto

was, "Don't let anything defeat you," Packer recalled to Black Collegian. His father also imparted words of wisdom that resonated with Packer. "Some days peanuts, some days shells," Packer recalled to the Times-Picayune. The result was a can-do attitude that helped Packer overcome the inequities of segregation and racism. "The fact that (the South) was a segregated place didn't mean we couldn't find a way to be successful," Packer told New Orleans City Business. "It never dawned on us to use (our race) as an excuse to not be successful."

Packer graduated from Mobile's Central High School in 1965 with high enough grades to land several college scholarships. Unfortunately, Tuskegee Institute—the school Packer had his heart set on—was not among them. Tuskegee, a historically black college, was one of the few in the South that offered an engineering program for African Americans. Packer scraped enough money for tuition and enrolled in the five-year engineering program. After three years, his father fell ill, and the money ran out. In 1969, Packer left Tuskegee and joined the United States Navy. His high entrance marks and engineering training helped land him a position in the Navy's nuclear power program. During an intense one-year course at a secret base in Idaho, Packer learned to operate nuclear reactors used to power submarines, aircraft carriers, and destroyers. After training, he was posted on the USS *Truxton*, a missile destroyer based in the South China Sea during the Vietnam War.

During his military training, Packer met his first wife, Carlene Banks. After he left the Navy in 1975, the pair moved briefly to Washington state, where their first son, Timothy, was born. The family moved to Connecticut, where Packer landed a job as a training coordinator with Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company. Packer's second child, Vanice, was born soon after. The birth happened quite suddenly, and Packer delivered the baby at home. "It wasn't a problem because I knew how to operate a nuclear reactor," he told New Orleans City Business. "Both are very procedure oriented." Packer juggled his job and fatherhood well enough to earn an associate degree in 1978 from Middlesex Community College and a bachelor's degree in business from Charter Oak College in 1980.

Tragedy struck Packer's life in 1980 when his wife Carlene died suddenly of a rare liver disease. Left alone to care for his two children, Packer decided it was time to move back home to the South. The closest he got, however, was Columbia, Maryland, where he landed a job as a senior engineer at General Physics Corporation. It was a good job, but he wanted to be closer to the family with two young children. With his background in nuclear power, including a senior operator's license—a highly specialized license for the nuclear industry—he looked for a power plant near Mobile, Alabama. The closest was Entergy's plant in Taft, Louisiana. He called the plant, and though there were no openings, his credentials made him a great candidate as a consultant. He joined the plant as a consultant in 1982 and helped Entergy build the Waterford III plant. His expertise landed him a position as training manager of the plant.

Dan met Catherine upon his arrival at Waterford, and they later married on July 22, 1983, recently celebrating 40 years of marriage. It was "love at first sight" when their

blended families met. By 1990, Packer had moved up the ranks at Waterford to become the plant's general manager. His promotion made him the first African American to manage a nuclear power plant. He was responsible for the entire operation of the site, from nuclear safety to profitability. It was a massive job, performed under the shadow of the immense environmental damage that could happen if an accident occurred. Dan believed there was nothing more complicated than being the plant manager of a nuclear power plant. Under Packer, the Waterford plant received some of the highest ratings in the country.

After 27 years in the nuclear industry on the technical side, Packer made the move to the executive offices. In 1996, he became a director of Entergy New Orleans. In that role, his main task was dealing with local government regulators. "He moved into a very political environment when he moved downtown," another Entergy executive told the Times-Picayune. "It was an interesting move. The stereotype of technical people is that they don't mix well in the political area, but he did an excellent job of understanding politics." Packer landed in New Orleans in the middle of a simmering pot of discontent. Since the early 1980s, New Orleans and Entergy had been brewing trouble. Rising energy costs, poor customer service, and over-billing charges plagued the company. In addition, the city of New Orleans and Entergy had engaged in a legal battle that went up to the federal level over the shared costs of building a Gulf Coast nuclear facility. Packer impressed those on both sides of the debate by using an approach that has become a hallmark of his leadership—diplomatically building bridges between opposing parties. "At the beginning, he was a quiet guy. He had been in nuclear before that, but obviously, he was a quick learner," a city council member told the Times-Picayune. "I think he learned early on that the way to get things done was to develop a relationship with the council and consumers, and I think he did a pretty good job of that." Entergy Corporation's CEO Wayne Leonard was also impressed. "[Packer] never came to me once and said: 'This was unfair; I shouldn't have been held accountable,'" Leonard told the Times-Picayune. "The bottom line was that he was an adult. A lot of times, you look around, and you see a lot of talented people, but you don't see a lot of grown-ups." The result was that Packer was appointed president of Entergy New Orleans in 1997. The CEO title was added in 1998. As CEO, Packer is responsible for all aspects of the company: power distribution, customer service, economic development, financial performance, and regulatory and governmental affairs.

As CEO, Packer continued to impress people within and outside the industry. In 2001, gas prices surged, leaving many New Orleanians struggling to meet payments. Packer announced that Entergy would not cut off power for non-payment. "It may sound like it was a natural thing to do, but, from a business standpoint, it was an extraordinary move," an Entergy executive told New Orleans City Business. "Dan's decision was, for some people, the difference between waking up in the dark and being able to turn the lights on. That was a defining moment in my professional relationship with him. In business school, you learn to make sure you can earn

and collect on any amount. What you don't learn in school are the leadership traits it takes to make a tough decision." Packer's most challenging job arrived on August 29, 2005, in the form of Hurricane Katrina. The storm flooded half of the utility's substations and two power plants. Nearly 100 percent of its clients were left without power. In September, Entergy New Orleans filed for bankruptcy protection. By the end of the year, almost 70 percent of Entergy New Orleans's client base was gone, and large swaths of the region were still without power. History has watched to see whether Packer's renowned strategic skills and unflappable attitude could save his company and restore regular services to its clients. He proved successful and retired from Entergy year-end, 2006. Though retirement was never in his plans, Dan continued his skills as President and CEO of Urban Solutions Inc., a multi-faceted firm involved with projects associated with an urban environment.

Key appointments and memberships included the American Association of Blacks in Energy, president emeritus; NFL Stadium Advisory Commission, chairman, 2001; New Orleans Regional Chamber of Commerce, chairman, 2001; New Orleans Aviation Board, chairman, 2002; Bring New Orleans Back Commission, member; Prince Hall Free and Accepted Masons Acacia Lodge No. 248 and Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Alpha Alpha Boule (New Orleans Chapter). Notable awards include YMCA, Black Achievement Award, 1988; Tulane University, Weiss Award, 2001; Boy Scouts of America, Southeast Louisiana Council, Whitney Young Service Award, 2004; and King of the Mobile Mardi Gras.

The Man, the Legacy, will never be forgotten. He touched so many in every facet of his life, fulfilling opportunities and dreams throughout his career. I am honored to say he was my dear friend and mentor. Rest well friend. His legacy will live on forever.

REMEMBERING JOSEPH L.
FIORDALISO

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a remarkable individual who dedicated his life to shaping our community and advancing our nation's energy sector. Joseph L. Fiordaliso, a true visionary and champion for renewable energy, passed away on September 6, 2023, leaving behind a legacy of innovation and progress that will continue to inspire generations to come. As President of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities since 2005, Joseph was a fierce advocate for affordable and reliable utility service. In May 2023, President Fiordaliso was appointed to the Joint Federal-State Task Force on Electric Transmission by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Joseph Fiordaliso's passion for service has never wavered throughout his storied career of public service to the people of New Jersey. Beginning with his role as Student Council President at Newark's East Side High School, Joseph carried an innate passion for education and leadership. He served more than

18 years as an educator for the Bloomfield and Valisburg communities. As a teacher, Joseph enjoyed cultivating the talents of countless students and the thrill of catapulting his students towards true academic achievement.

Shortly thereafter, Fiordaliso began serving his community of Livingston, New Jersey as Councilman for the Township. As a local leader, Joseph advocated for greater resources for seniors and revitalized the Livingston Arts Council. For 12 years as Mayor of Livingston, he formed long-lasting state and federal relationships by hosting Members of Congress, U.S. Senators, Governors, and Democratic Presidential candidate Bill Clinton in 1992.

Through his steadfast advocacy for Livingston, Joseph Fiordaliso was able to coordinate and host an official stop of the Olympic Torch of the 1996 Summer Olympic games.

Joseph Fiordaliso held leadership positions as a member of the Board of Directors of the United Way, the Board of Directors of the Livingston YMCA, the Board of Directors of the First Occupational Center of New Jersey, and was a proud member of UNICO, the largest Italian American service organization in the United States. Later, Joseph was honored as UNICO's Citizen of the Year in 2003.

Now, as we honor Joseph Fiordaliso's memory as a prominent leader and public servant for New Jersey, we will always appreciate the tremendous progress in the transition to cleaner forms of energy. Joseph's signature windmill lapel pin served as a reminder for his vision of making New Jersey an offshore wind industry hub. His extensive work and legacy earned Fiordaliso due recognition as a national leader on utility and energy issues.

Mr. Speaker, from the bottom of my heart, I ask that you join our colleagues, friends, family, and the residents of New Jersey in recognizing Joseph Fiordaliso for his outstanding work. I thank Joseph Fiordaliso. May God bless his soul and may his wife Marilyn, two children Joe and Dana stand proud.

CONGRATULATING DR. TERRENCE
CRONIN FOR HIS COMPLETION
OF HIS TERM AS THE AMERICAN
ACADEMY OF DERMATOLOGY
PRESIDENT

HON. BILL POSEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to congratulate Dr. Terrence Cronin on his completion of his term as the American Academy of Dermatology President. For eighteen years, Dr. Cronin has been involved with the Academy at a leadership level and helped represent thousands of dermatological physicians and the patients they serve.

As President, Dr. Cronin led the world's largest dermatologic society, representing more than 20,800 physicians. He has also been a staunch advocate for Medicare payment reform to help ensure good quality of care for seniors by fighting cuts to physician reimbursement.

Dr. Cronin earned his medical degree from Wake Forest University in North Carolina and completed his dermatology residency at the University of Miami. At the University of Miami, he also served as the chief resident, where he

oversaw clinical scheduling, managing resident education programs, and served as a liaison between the residents and the facility.

Before his term as President, Dr. Cronin served as a chair of the Academy's Advisory Board, as well as being a member of the Board of Directors and its Executive Committee.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Dr. Cronin on a fantastic job as the American Academy of Dermatology President and wish him well as he continues his work with the Academy and his private practice in Melbourne, Florida.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEE SHORT-TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE ACT OF 2024

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Federal Employee Short-Term Disability Insurance Act of 2024, which would help provide financial relief for federal employees who have a short-term injury or disability, become pregnant or develop a pregnancy-related illness. This bill would offer federal employees short-term disability insurance at no cost to the federal government. Employees would be responsible for 100 percent of the premiums and be able to receive disability insurance benefits for up to one year, which would replace a portion of their lost income due to a nonwork-related injury or illness or pregnancy. This bill is more important now than ever with the prevalence of so-called Long COVID.

I decided to investigate how we could provide short-term disability insurance for federal employees after learning that many of them already buy short-term disability insurance as individuals in the private market at high individual rates. Although federal employees have good health insurance, federal health benefits do not replace lost income if employees are unable to work. Moreover, while federal employees may have available sick or annual leave days, they may not have enough such days to pay the bills if they have to be out of work for an extended period, such as following surgery. Although there are long-term disability options for federal employees who become permanently disabled, federal employees do not qualify for such benefits until they have worked for the federal government for at least 18 months. This bill does no more than put federal employees in the same position as many of their private-sector counterparts, who often have access to disability insurance through an employer at group rates, an option unavailable to federal employees. This bill would prohibit participating insurance companies from excluding employees based on pre-existing conditions. Because of the federal government's purchasing power, this bill would provide these benefits at a lower rate than is available for employees purchasing as individuals, as many do. Under this bill, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management would contract with private carriers to provide this coverage, essentially providing the equivalent of group coverage available to many workers in the private sector.

According to the Social Security Administration, a 20-year-old worker has a one-in-four chance of becoming disabled by retirement age. The majority of disabilities are not caused by major accidents, but by injuries or illnesses, such as back injuries or cancer, according to the Council for Disability Awareness.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MR. ROBERT DITTMER

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mr. Robert Dittmer. Mr. Dittmer, who passed away at the age of 103, leaves behind an indelible legacy of service to his country and the Solano County Community.

Born in Oakland, California in 1920, Mr. Dittmer was a lifelong resident of Northern California. As America entered World War II, Mr. Dittmer's commitment to his country led him to join the United States Army Air Corps. He flew 35 successful combat missions over Germany, ultimately becoming a Second Lieutenant and earning an Air Medal for his service.

As the war ended, Mr. Dittmer's service to others continued. He joined the fire service and became the Assistant Chief of the Fairfield-Suisun Army Air Base Fire Department. In 1956, Mr. Dittmer was awarded a commendation for entering the burning wreckage of a crashed aircraft and saving the life of the injured crew.

After retiring from the Fire Department, Mr. Dittmer continued to serve his community, advancing efforts to identify and address unmet needs in Solano County. He facilitated local real-estate ventures to bolster the local economy and was a critical leader within the downtown Fairfield business community.

Mr. Dittmer will be remembered not only for his decades of service to his country and the Solano County community but also for his genuine spirit of selflessness and innovation. He impacted the lives of countless members of his community, and his steadfast leadership undeniably enhanced the lives of his fellow Solano County residents.

Mr. Dittmer's enduring spirit will live on in his son, daughter, four grandchildren, and the community he dedicated his life to serving. I want to extend my deepest sympathy to Mr. Dittmer's loved ones. I know they and the people of Solano County join me in celebrating his life and legacy.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF MR. HILBERT MARGOL

HON. RICHARD MCCORMICK

OF GEORGIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. MCCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, today, I pay tribute to the incredible service and life of Mr. Hilbert "Hibby" Margol of Dunwoody, Georgia. Mr. Margol is a World War II veteran and, this

month, I join his friends and family in celebrating his 100th birthday.

Mr. Hilbert Margol was born on February 22, 1924, just 10 minutes before his identical twin brother, Howard. The two brothers attended the University of Florida and were drafted into the U.S. Army in 1944. They were inseparable until they were assigned to different infantry divisions.

In 1942, the military instituted a policy of separating siblings when assigned to military units or ships. Their mother, Mrs. Margol, took matters into her own hands and wrote a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt requesting the U.S. Army make an exception for her sons to be placed together. Her plea was successful, and the brothers were back together again.

The pair were assigned to the U.S. Army 42nd Infantry "Rainbow" Division, 392nd Field Artillery Battalion, as Howitzers gunners. Seven months after D-Day, the Margol brothers arrived in Europe. As their unit moved toward Munich, Germany, they happened upon a fence at the end of a rural two-lane road. They quickly realized they had stumbled upon a massive, almost industrial-looking complex. It was Dachau, the first Nazi Concentration Camp.

As Mr. Margol searched the area, he found dozens of railroad cars loaded with piles of human remains. He documented the horrors of Dachau with a Brownie camera. These photographs are on display at the United States Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C.

After the war, the brothers earned their degrees from the University of Florida in 1948 and married their wives in the same year. Hilbert moved to Atlanta in 1987 with his wife, Betty Ann, and they have lived there ever since.

Mr. Margol is a Jewish American hero and a liberator, and he turns 100 years old on February 22, 2024. May America and the great State of Georgia be forever blessed with patriots like Hilbert Margol. His service to our Nation is a debt we can never truly repay.

HONORING SHERIFF RICHARD BERDNIK

HON. BILL PASCHELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. PASCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a remarkable public servant who dedicated his life to law enforcement, Sheriff Richard Berdnik. Sheriff Berdnik served twenty-eight years with the Clifton Police Department. After his time with the City of Clifton, he joined the County of Passaic as the Commander of the Juvenile Division and the SWAT Team. On January 1, 2011, Richard was elected to the role of Passaic County Sheriff. A prominent leader among law enforcement, Sheriff Berdnik was also a member of the FBI National Academy Associates, the New Jersey Honor Legion of Decorated Officers, and the International Chiefs of Police Association.

A native of Clifton, New Jersey, Richard Berdnik graduated from Clifton High School, the New Jersey State Police Academy, FBI National Academy, and FBI National Executive Institute. Sheriff Berdnik took criminal justice

courses at Seton Hall University, the University of Virginia, and Caldwell College. Sheriff Berdnik's legacy embodies the principle of service over self. His impact is woven into the fabric of the Ninth Congressional District, exemplified by the officers he mentored, and the countless individuals he helped.

Beyond his professional achievements, Sheriff Berdnik was a beloved figure in our community. He was a Parishioner and Eucharistic Minister at Saint Andrew's Church in Clifton, New Jersey. As a proud member of the Polish community, Sheriff Berdnik served as the Marshal for the Passaic-Clifton & Vicinity Contingent in the Pulaski Day Parade in 2011 and was the Grand Marshal of the Pulaski Day Parade in New York City in 2014.

Known for his unwavering commitment to justice and the well-being of the public, Sheriff Berdnik served as a beacon of bravery and compassion. Under his leadership, Richard emphasized the importance of community engagement and proactive policing in order to build trust with the residents of Passaic County. His innovative approach undertook a complete top to bottom review of the department effectively streamlining operations within the Patrol, Corrections and Courthouse Divisions.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, friends, family, and the residents of New Jersey in recognizing Sheriff Richard Berdnik for his outstanding contributions to law enforcement and beyond. I thank Sheriff Berdnik. He was a mentor, a friend, and a pillar in our community. God bless his soul and may his wife Monica, and four children Ashley, Ryan, Alyssa, and Kevin stand proud.

RECOGNIZING THOMAS H. NEALE,
CRS ANALYST

HON. BRYAN STEIL

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. STEIL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and service of Thomas Holleran Neale, a specialist at the Congressional Research Service who served Congress for over 53 years until his death this year. Tom was born in 1943 and grew up in Auburn, New York. He attended Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, Syracuse University, and the Université of Dijon. At CRS, he served countless members of Congress and committees with his expertise in American elections, political history, and constitutional theory.

Tom was a public servant, an active member of the community, and a faithful Catholic. He served as a member of community organizations including serving as president of the Association of Oldest Inhabitants. He contributed writings to *Wilson Quarterly*, the *Encyclopedia of the United States Congress*, and the *Encyclopedia of the United States in the 19th Century*. He lectured on American elections at Meridian International, the Organization of American States, and the House of Representatives' Parliamentary Development Task Force and its House Democracy Partnership. And on behalf of the State Department, he lectured at the Foreign Press Center in Washington, the U.S. Embassy in Austria and several Austrian universities, and the Egyptian Parliament and the American University in Cairo. He served Congress well and was rec-

ognized by many of his colleagues as an outstanding scholar and a dear friend to many. On behalf of all of Congress, I want to thank Tom for his enduring service to this institution.

HONORING THE CITY OF PASSAIC

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with immense pride and joy to recognize a significant milestone as the City of Passaic celebrates its 150th anniversary. Since the city's incorporation in 1873, Passaic has evolved from a humble settlement into a vibrant and diverse urban center that stands as a beacon of progress. This historic achievement is a testament to the resilience, growth, and community spirit that have defined the City of Passaic over the past century and a half.

The industrious spirit of Passaic's residents has been the driving force behind its success. From the early days of fabric mills to the present, the people of Passaic have worked together to build a city that fosters innovation, economic prosperity, and cultural diversity. Let us reflect on the rich history, enduring spirit, and remarkable growth as we commemorate the sesquicentennial anniversary of the City of Passaic.

The Lenni-Lenape Native Americans are the earliest recorded inhabitants of the area situated in the City of Passaic. The Lenni-Lenape were met by Hartman Michielsen Vreeland, a Dutch settler and trader, who purchased Dundee Island and Pulaski Park along the Passaic River on April 4, 1678. The Dutch settlement expanded its land through further deeds and purchases over the next decade. In 1693, the Dutch settlement incorporated as the Township of Acquackanonk as part of northern Essex County.

The Township of Acquackanonk was later moved to Passaic County after being formed in 1837 by combining parts of northern Essex County and western Bergen County. In 1869 the Township of Acquackanonk officially changed its name to the City of Passaic. As the area experienced population and commercial growth, community members voted to incorporate as the City of Passaic in 1873.

Following the incorporation, the City of Passaic experienced an industrial boom fueled by immigration from European countries. By the late 19th century, critical developments such as the construction of the Erie Railroad helped Passaic become an economic hub with flourishing manufacturing and commerce. The city established a diverse economy with a thriving textile industry producing silk and cotton.

Today, there are nearly 70,000 residents that call the City of Passaic their home. The city has a large immigrant population and is a melting pot evident through the array of multicultural businesses, restaurants, and community events. Throughout Passaic's history, community leaders and residents played a key role in shaping Passaic into the exceptional city we celebrate today. One of Passaic's most notable figures is Mayor Hector C. Lora. His leadership and wisdom continue to guide the City of Passaic through all challenges, always emerging stronger.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, friends, family, and the residents of

New Jersey in recognizing the 150th anniversary of the City of Passaic. I take this opportunity to congratulate the residents of Passaic on this historic milestone. May this celebration serve as a moment to honor the past, revel in the present, and look forward to a future filled with continued growth, prosperity, and fortitude.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF MARY LOUISE ORTA

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mary Louise Orta as her family gathers to remember her life and the many people she touched along the way.

Mary Louise Orta was the matriarch of the Orta Family. She was born in New Braunfels, Texas on November 13, 1931. She met and married Albert Orta in 1949 and began their life together in Texas before moving to California in 1973.

Mrs. Orta was a military spouse who exemplified the virtues of family, commitment, and service. She supported her husband Albert's career as he served our nation in the United States Air Force, then as an employee of the Department of Defense while traveling to several countries until his retirement in 1980. During this time, Mary remained home and continued her own life of service by supporting his career and raising their 12 children.

In 1981, at age 50, as her youngest child entered kindergarten, Mrs. Orta joined the workforce volunteering at the local school. Soon thereafter, she was hired by the Elk Grove Unified School District as a full-time employee at Valley High School in Sacramento County where she remained until her retirement in 2001. She was a tireless contributor to her school community, always first to volunteer and never wavered when asked to help. Throughout her twenty-year career, Mrs. Orta received several recognitions and was honored by the California State Senate and at districtwide ceremonies for her many contributions to staff, school administration, and students at Valley High School.

Mary Orta was a remarkable woman. She was a loving and devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She enjoyed the simple pleasures of life, finding joy in the company of family and close friends. She proudly walked with school administration at high school graduations, supported her children and grandchildren at events and family gatherings. Her unwavering love for those she cared for was her driving force and her faith, kindness and compassion will undoubtedly be a continuing source of strength for her family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mary Louise Orta as her family gathers to honor her incredible life and legacy.

TRIBUTE TO THE INNOCENT VICTIMS OF THE SUMGAI T POGROM

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 36th anniversary of the pogrom against the Armenian residents of Sumgait, Azerbaijan. From February 27 to 29, 1988, Azerbaijani mobs assaulted and killed Armenians, leaving dozens of Armenian civilians dead and hundreds injured. Women and girls were raped, and some victims were burned alive after being tortured and beaten. Those who survived the carnage fled their homes and businesses, leaving behind all but the clothes on their backs.

In a pattern all too familiar to the Armenian people, the Azerbaijani authorities made little effort to punish those responsible, instead attempting to cover up the atrocities in Sumgait to this day, as well as denying the role of senior government officials in instigating the violence.

In the years that followed this unspeakable massacre, Armenians living in Kirovabad, Baku, and Maragha suffered a similar fate. These pogroms were part of a pattern of hateful, racist anti-Armenian propaganda and activities occurring throughout Azerbaijan, dehumanizing its Armenian residents, and laying the groundwork for decades of aggression and mass violence. This brutality culminated when the Azerbaijani government initiated war against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, also known as Artsakh.

Beginning on September 27, 2020, and over 44 days, Azerbaijani forces invaded and murdered innocent Armenians in Artsakh and displaced tens of thousands more. They continued to terrorize the people of Artsakh in subsequent military attacks, and by blocking the Lachin Corridor—which left 120,000 people without access to food, water, medical supplies and services, gas, and electricity for over 9 months. On September 19, 2023, the Aliyev regime took full advantage of a people they had systematically starved, and launched a large-scale attack, further escalating their ethnic cleansing and genocidal campaign against the indigenous Armenian people of Artsakh. At least 200 people were killed, 400 wounded, over 100,000 ethnic Armenians were forcibly displaced, and Azerbaijan now holds Artsakh's political and military leadership, civilians, and prisoners of war hostage. With no help from the international community to confront Azerbaijan's military aggression, Artsakh was forced to negotiate under duress and consequently agreed to dissolve their democratically elected government.

There is also real and growing concern that Aliyev has his eyes set on land beyond Artsakh and will continue to seek further territory and concessions from Armenia by force. To this day, Azerbaijani forces remain present on sovereign Armenian land, in violation of Armenia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and last month, President Aliyev made alarming remarks, including his refusal to remove troops from Armenian territory. These are the horrific consequences when aggression and hatred grow unchecked and when Aliyev's hostility is met with deafening silence, emboldening him to continue, and expand, his

unprovoked attacks on the Armenian people, knowing there will be no repercussions.

Azerbaijan's campaign of death and destruction against Armenians have been nothing short of deplorable, including the destruction of religious and cultural sites in Artsakh to erase or falsify history, and the torture, mutilation and killing of Armenian civilians, prisoners of war and soldiers. This February also marks 20 years of a horrific crime when Ramil Safarov, an Azerbaijani army captain savagely murdered an Armenian army lieutenant, Gurban Margaryan with an axe while he slept. The two were participating in a NATO Partnership for Peace exercise at the time in Hungary. In 2012, Safarov was sent home to Azerbaijan, purportedly to serve out the remainder of his sentence. Instead, he was pardoned, promoted, and paraded through the streets of Baku as a returning hero. There is no more dramatic illustration of Azerbaijan's continued posture of hatred towards their Armenian neighbor than their celebration of a cold-blooded murderer.

Though the United States and international partners have condemned Azerbaijan's aggression and military assault against Armenians, the time for strong statements alone has clearly long passed. Condemnation must be followed by real consequences. The United States must hold Azerbaijan and its leadership accountable and take concrete action and press Azerbaijan to return to compliance with international law and order. Crimes against humanity cannot be ignored and cannot go unanswered.

The United States must use its immense bully pulpit to apply direct pressure to the Aliyev regime in Azerbaijan, by enforcing restrictions on additional military assistance to Baku pursuant to Section 907 and calling on Azerbaijan to immediately return all Armenian POWs, hostages, and other detainees, and provide information on the status of those still be detained or missing. Additionally, the Biden Administration should immediately implement sanctions under the Magnitsky Act against Azeri officials responsible for human rights abuses.

The United States must also demand an immediate withdrawal of Azeri forces from the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia, provide security assistance to Armenia including expanding humanitarian aid to assist Artsakh refugees, and help ensure the safety and security of Armenians who seek to return to their homes in Artsakh. Finally, the U.S. Department of State must continue to call attention to the destruction and desecration of Armenian religious and cultural sites by Azerbaijan, and urge their safeguarding and preservation. Only by using every diplomatic tool at their disposal, including sanctions, against Azerbaijan can we help guarantee the safety, security and continued territorial integrity of Armenia.

As we pause to remember the innocent victims of the pogroms, we are also reminded that despite the trials the Armenian people have faced, it has not broken their faith, determination, and their will to survive in the face of constant threats from Azerbaijan. Today, let us recommit ourselves to doing everything we can to bring peace and justice to our Armenian brothers and sisters abroad, once and for all.

HONORING HEB ISD EDUCATION FOUNDATION'S AWARD OF EXCELLENCE RECIPIENTS

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the following students who received HEB ISD Education Foundation's Award of Excellence in their respective fields of study: Aiden Aguirre, Isaiah Arellano, Matthew Boyd, Andrew Brooks, Dayton Crenshaw, Alexia Del Vecchio, Julie Eisermann, Anastasia Fike, Charles Fultz, Lauren Galkantas, Rafael Garcia, Orinda Dreshaj, Chloe Harmon, Ethan Hildebrand, Giselle Hill, Emma Hiros, Jacquelyn Holisinger, Mia Jax, Jayla King, Sagar Lamichhane, Ali Landreth, Jude Langsdorf, Mary McColm, Kyliya Murphy, Dorine Ngara, Maddox Olatunde, Claire Payne, Valerie Reyes, Jerry Rivera, Julissa Rodriguez, Avery Vignali, Cassidy Zastrow, and Zecharias Zewdie. I'm inspired by these students' hard work, and I wish them the best of luck in the future.

HONORING THE LATE DR. CLINTON BATTLE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Dr. Clinton Battle.

Born in the 1920s, Dr. Clinton Battle was known for his remarkable medical service to Indianola, Mississippi that contributed to the medical field where he earned nationwide recognition.

In the 1950s Dr. Battle received national press for his renowned delivery of first conjoined Siamese twins to ever be successfully separated.

Outside of the medical field, Battle helped to revive the local chapter of The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), helping over 100 African Americans register to vote.

He always inspired African Americans to rise during the Jim Crow era. Because of this contribution to civil rights and medicine, Dr. Clinton Battle has been named a recipient of the Civil Rights Trail Marker as a trailblazer for Civil Rights and his medical accomplishments.

Dr. Battle's legacy and his contribution to medicine will continue to transcend time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the late Dr. Clinton Battle for his dedication to medicine and Civil Rights.

HONORING HUSEYIN BAYRAM

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an esteemed and invaluable member of New Jersey's Ninth Congressional District,

Mr. Huseyin Bayram. His contributions to our community distinguish him as a prominent figure, serving as the proud owner of Toro's Restaurant and the New Corral. Today I join the City of Paterson as they honor his contributions by awarding him with the Key to the City. Huseyin is an outstanding community leader, philanthropist, and entrepreneur who continuously demonstrates an unwavering commitment to make a positive impact extending beyond the State of New Jersey.

For over three decades, Huseyin Bayram has been active in the City of Paterson. His entrepreneurial spirit is embodied in the success of the New Corral in Clifton and the Toro's Restaurants, located in Paterson, Clifton, and Montclair. The Toro's Restaurant of Paterson is an iconic dining establishment that opened its doors in 1972.

Mr. Bayram's compassionate philanthropy created numerous local initiatives, including his donation of over 10,000 meals to community members during the novel coronavirus pandemic. Huseyin wanted to show his appreciation for frontline healthcare workers by providing free meals to doctors and nurses at three hospitals in New York. Huseyin played a critical role in spearheading and organizing relief efforts for the earthquake of Turkey in 2023. Huseyin's efforts have not only enhanced our community's well-being but also fostered a spirit of unity and cooperation among its members.

Mr. Bayram led 150,000 members as the President of the Turkish American Giresun Organization, representing the largest Turkish population in the United States. In 2017, the City of Paterson appointed Huseyin as Deputy Mayor under Mayor Jane Williams-Warren establishing his role in local governance. Furthermore, he holds the position of Vice-President with the Turkish-American Federation of New York and the Paterson Mevlana Mosque, showcasing how the Turkish community places their trust in his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, friends, family, and the residents of the City of Paterson in recognizing Mr. Bayram. I take this opportunity to honor the great work Huseyin Bayram has accomplished. May his work continue to be a guiding light in our community and inspire others to strive for excellence in service.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF MAYOR IRMA ANDERSON

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleague, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE and Congressman MARK DESAULNIER, to honor the life and legacy of Mayor Irma Anderson, a trailblazing leader within Contra Costa County and devout public servant. Mayor Anderson, who passed away at the age of 93, leaves behind an indelible legacy as a mayor, nurse, and community advocate.

Born and raised in Boston, Mayor Anderson's passion for public service began at a young age. After serving as Student Body President and Valedictorian of her high school, she became one of the first Black students to

attend and graduate from Cornell School of Nursing. In 1959, Mayor Anderson moved to Richmond, California with her husband, Reverend Booker T. Anderson, Jr., beginning a lifelong residency in the Contra Costa County community.

Fueled by her passion for service and sincere belief in caring for those around her, Mayor Anderson worked diligently for the Contra Costa County Health Department for 20 years. She eventually became the first Black Assistant Director and Director of Public Health Nursing in Contra Costa County, and her unwavering leadership undeniably improved her community.

Following her extensive career in public health, Mayor Anderson's commitment to service led her to run for Richmond City Council. In 1993, she became the first Black woman to serve as a Richmond City Council Member. After two successful terms on the Richmond City Council, Mayor Anderson made history yet again in 2001, when she became the first Black woman to be elected mayor of a major California city.

Mayor Anderson's career in public service was characterized by her spirit for advocacy and commitment to giving a voice to the unrepresented. She developed a historic partnership with the West Contra Costa Unified School District, founding Kids! First, which cultivates and expands after-school programs throughout Richmond. In addition, she held the "Richmond Rises Above Violence Conference," which galvanized Richmond's public health approach to violence prevention. Subsequently, Richmond created an Office of Violence Prevention, later the Office of Neighborhood Safety, a nationally recognized violence intervention strategy.

Mayor Anderson's spirit of innovation was expressed both through her critical leadership and vital work as Metropolitan Transportation Committee Commissioner. She spearheaded efforts to advance multiple bridge rehabilitation and expansion projects, helping ensure Contra Costa County's roads were safe and secure. During her tenure as Mayor and Commissioner, Mayor Anderson presided over the transformation of downtown Richmond into a model of transit-oriented development.

Mayor Anderson will be remembered for her decades of service to Contra Costa County and her genuine spirit of kindness and compassion. She impacted the lives of countless community members and her steadfast leadership, constant smile, and patient mentorship brought comfort to all who knew her. Mayor Anderson's enduring spirit will live on in her son and the community she dedicated her life to serving. We would like to extend our deepest sympathies to Mayor Anderson's loved ones. We know they and the people of Contra Costa County will join us in celebrating her life and legacy.

RECOGNIZING MS. KAREN KING

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Karen King for her dedicated service to the California public transit industry and to congratulate her on her well-earned re-

tirement from the Golden Empire Transit District. Ms. King's career in public transit began in 1976 at the Utah Transit Authority. Ten years later, Ms. King joined Long Beach Transit as a Grants Administrator. She quickly moved up the leadership ranks, and in 1995 was named Executive Director of Transportation. In 1998, Ms. King worked for the North San Diego County Transit Development as the Director of Development and Communications Services and was selected as the agency's Executive Director in 2001. In 2008, Ms. King moved to Bakersfield where she became the Chief Executive Officer of the Golden Empire Transit District. During her tenure as CEO, Ms. King has been steadfast in her commitment to meeting the transportation needs of all Bakersfield residents. She helped develop and implement the On-Demand Microtransit service program, which was first piloted in southwest Bakersfield and has since expanded across the city. The program increases transportation access for all residents by offering low-cost transportation to residents traveling to popular destinations in the city. Ms. King has directed other initiatives including a partnership with Kern Health Systems to provide rides to appointments for the more than 300,000 members of Kern Family Health Care. Ms. King is also coordinating the Long Range Operational Service Analysis, which aims to improve local transportation and return ridership to pre-pandemic levels. Ms. King has been recognized at the local, state, and national levels for her leadership in the public transit industry. She is the Vice Chair of the California Transit Association (CTA) and in 2021, was selected for a two-year term as Chair.

Ms. King has also served as Chair of the CTA's COVID-19 Relief Task Force, where she has helped California's public transit industry recover from the pandemic. In 2018, Ms. King received a Distinguished Service Award from the CTA, to celebrate her distinguished career and outstanding contributions. This year, Ms. King is receiving the CTA's award for Innovation and Resiliency, to celebrate her commitment to the innovation of the industry and well-being of all Bakersfield commuters. Ms. King's many accomplishments are a true testament to her character and leadership. I'm confident that her service to the Golden Empire Transit District and her passion for improving public transit for all residents of our community will have a lasting impact for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in thanking Ms. King for her more than 40 years of dedicated service to the public transit industry and wishing her a happy and well-deserved retirement.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EQUAL
FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Equal Federal Funding for the District of Columbia Act, which would amend title 1 of the United States Code to deem the District of Columbia as both a state and political

subdivision of a state (such as a city or county) for the purpose of eligibility for federal funding, unless otherwise provided in a statute. D.C. operates as the functional equivalent of a state, city and county, and D.C. residents pay all federal taxes. Therefore, D.C. deserves to be eligible for federal funding available for each level of government.

While federal statutes generally expressly treat D.C. as a state for federal funding—and most federal grants go to states—federal statutes that provide federal funding directly to political subdivisions are often silent on whether D.C. is to be treated as a political subdivision. In the absence of clear language in a statute, federal agencies are inconsistent in their treatment of D.C.'s eligibility for federal funding.

By amending title 1 of the U.S. Code to deem D.C. as both a state and political subdivision for federal funding, this bill would automatically correct imprecise treatment of D.C.'s eligibility for federal funding in existing and future statutes and remove discretion from federal agencies in their treatment of D.C.'s eligibility for federal funding.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING THE LIGHTHOUSE
COMMUNITY HOSPICE AND
FOUNDER, JOCELYN CAMPBELL

HON. TROY A. CARTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to The Lighthouse Community Hospice, and its founder Jocelyn Campbell as they host their Annual "Covered in Love" Gala.

Ms. Campbell has devoted over 20 years to end-of-life care, working as an advocate for the preservation of dignity and compassion for those approaching the end of their lives. In her role as the Chief Executive Officer of The Lighthouse Community Hospice, Ms. Campbell serves as a pioneer in advocating for quality end-of-life care. She oversees a dedicated and hardworking group of healthcare professionals and takes part in strategic partnership and planning in order to ensure that their programs reach their maximum potential. In 2023, the Lighthouse Community Hospice served as a signature community resource at the 52nd Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Annual Legislative Caucus in our nation's capital. In addition to her role as CEO of the Lighthouse Community Hospice, Campbell simultaneously serves as the CEO of Health Comply AI. Through her work at Health Comply AI, she is able to balance her expertise in cutting-edge artificial intelligence technologies with her passion for high standard health care delivery, in developing AI-driven solutions for administering healthcare services and organizations.

The Lighthouse Community Hospice helps to alleviate the difficult, emotional experience that is caring for a loved one who is near death. They adopt a dedicated and compas-

sionate approach to the work that they do, helping each family to develop a plan that centers around preserving the dignity and wishes of the individual approaching eternal rest.

I am humbled to acknowledge The Lighthouse Community Hospice and Ms. Jocelyn Campbell in their global caregiver advocacy movement for end-of-life initiatives. The tireless, dedicated, and consistent work that they do continue to profoundly impact the ways in which end-of-life care is approached and administered both within our community and beyond.

RECOGNIZING DR. JEFFREY
BEAUVAIS, PH.D.

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition and appreciation of Dr. Jeffrey Beauvais, Ph.D. upon his completion of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship Program. Dr. Beauvais served as a Knauss fellow in my Washington, D.C. office from February 2023 until February 2024.

As an integral member of my legislative staff, Dr. Beauvais assisted my work on the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, particularly my work on the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment and the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management. Over the past twelve months, he worked closely with the Committee and the rest of my personal office staff in developing several pieces of critical legislation.

Dr. Beauvais overhauled my "FEMA Disaster Preparedness Improvement Act" from the 116th Congress to include new, novel reforms to federal programs for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. He also developed new legislation, the "Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Removal Act of 2024," in response to a blue-ribbon report by the Pacific States' Oil Spill Task Force published on January 14, 2020. Among other key reforms, this new legislation would unlock more than \$1.5 billion annually in dedicated federal funding under the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund to remove abandoned and derelict vessels from federally regulated waterways. I expect to introduce both bills in the coming months, thanks in no small part to his work.

Dr. Beauvais received his doctorate in integrative conservation and ecology from the University of Georgia, Athens in 2022, and graduated with honors from the Georgia Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of Science in biology in 2015. I expect Dr. Beauvais' fellowship in my office will inspire and inform his future endeavors with his passion for his native coastal Georgia a recurring theme throughout his career and life.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of California's eighth Congressional district, I ex-

tend our deepest appreciation to Dr. Beauvais for his dedicated service as a Knauss fellow. He will always remain a deeply valued member of Team Garamendi.

HONORING 100 YEARS OF THE
CULPEPER COUNTY VOLUNTEER
FIRE DEPARTMENT, COMPANY 1

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Culpeper Volunteer Fire Department, Company 1 for their 100 years of dedicated service toward their mission to aid in the preservation and protection of life and property from and during fires, and their commitment to the Culpeper community.

The Culpeper Volunteer Fire Department was born from a desire to help neighbors in need. Chartered in January 1924, the department was first led by Chief J. William Swan and was comprised of 19 volunteers ready to answer the call. In their early days, they relied on their 1923 American LaFrance Brockway "Torpedo" Engine, which they housed on the ground floor of the Municipal Building. Volunteer firefighters used canvas coats with leather gloves bought at local hardware stores, and some donned World War I metal helmets or construction helmets to fight fires. It was not until the early 1950s that Culpeper volunteer firefighters got their first official fireproof gear. Soon after, they relocated to West Davis Street where they are still located today.

The Culpeper Volunteer Fire Department is a unique and treasured organization. Made up completely of volunteers from all walks of life, these brave individuals respond to emergencies in their community in their spare time. Through their service, they provide fire protection and life-saving aid to more than 54,000 Culpeper County residents and cover 383 square miles.

What began as a dream to help their neighbors has grown into a strong organization that continues to uphold the founding mission set 100 years ago—"to provide emergency services to the citizens of our entire community . . . achieved through our principles of commitment, education, recognized standards, and professionalism." Today they boast a membership of 65 volunteer firefighters. In 2023, they answered 913 calls with a fleet composed of an engine, a pumper, a rescue engine, and more, all purchased with the help of their community through fundraising and donations.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the work and commitment to services that Culpeper Volunteer Fire Department, Company 1 has carried out over the last 100 years. Their service to the community is invaluable, and I wish them the best as they continue their work to help our neighbors when they most need it.