

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE OF KEITH KING

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor the life, legacy, and faith of Keith King, who died of pancreatic cancer on February 3, 2024, at the age of 75. Keith was a champion for the Pikes Peak region as a successful and generous business entrepreneur, elected official, and advocate for school choice and charter schools. Keith had a tremendous impact on those around him, but it was only possible because he was driven and directed by his love for Jesus Christ and his family. Keith King was truly a giant in advancing policies that helped families, children, schools, and the state of Colorado. In addition to being a personal colleague in the Colorado legislature for seven years and a brother in Christ, Keith was my friend.

Born in Tekoa, Washington, Keith moved to Colorado and completed his bachelor's degree at Colorado State University, Pueblo in industrial education in 1970. He continued his education at Oregon State University in 1976 with a master's degree in vocational education. It was through his studies that his already budding desire to see children succeed in school and have as many education choices as possible available to them bloomed. Keith served on the Cheyenne Mountain School board from 1991 to 1995; and was president of Cheyenne Mountain Charter Academy, which he co-founded, from 1995 to 1998. Keith also started Colorado Springs Early Colleges and Colorado Early Colleges which provided high schoolers the opportunity to take college classes and receive job training. Education choice and specifically the emergence and growth of charter schools in Colorado became one of Keith's main passions in his legislative career.

First elected to the Colorado House of Representatives in 1999, Keith's first year in the legislature showed immediate results. During his first session in office, Keith was the lead sponsor of two bills that improved charter school structures and operations that were signed into law. This impressive success record was only the beginning of Keith's impact on Colorado. Keith sponsored the annual school finance act three times and sponsored the landmark College Opportunity Fund which created substantial change to the funding system for public colleges and universities.

Keith and his wife Sandi of more than fifty years enjoyed the blessings of their sons Jeremy and Brandon, their families, and their five grandchildren. A devoted husband and Christian, Keith embodied 1 Corinthians 16:13–14 in every way that he lived his life, especially in the public square as a legislator: "Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith, be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love."

Education remains one of the most important pillars of our society today. Keith recog-

nized that high-quality and well-funded education gave each child the best chance at an impactful life. Keith's faith and his family provided Keith with his "North Star" as he used his gifts and abilities to make life better for all of those around him. Even into his later years, Keith was on campus at local high schools teaching and coaching basketball. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in Congress join me in remembering and honoring the life of a faithful man in Keith King whose impact in the Pikes Peak region will be felt for the rest of time.

HONORING ERNA JE'NEEN FRENCH

HON. CORI BUSH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Ms. BUSH. Mr. Speaker, I, along with the people of St. Louis, rise to honor and celebrate the life and legacy of Erna Je'Neen French. Erna was a giant in the gospel community, a mother, grandmother, and sister who dedicated her life to spreading the joy and love of God through her powerful voice.

Erna professed her devotion to Jesus Christ at the early age of five, and she knew she would one day be a famous gospel singer. Inspired by her mother Lavera, gospel music was always central to Erna's life. Erna was a scholar of spiritual hymns, and she understood the weight those verses carried. Before the age of 12, Erna recorded three national gospel records with the Thomas A. Dorsey National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses under the St. Louis Gospel Choral Union, the O'Neal Twins, and the Stan Lee Gospel Music Workshop. Later in her life, Erna recorded with numerous artists and ministries nationally and internationally and was a member of the Gospel Music Workshop of America, the Sanctified POSSE, GEMCA, Dello Thedford and the Gospel Symphonic Choir, Rusty Watson, One Voice, the Psalms of David, and countless other ministries. In 2018, Erna accomplished a lifelong dream releasing her project "Always" with the help of Levi Too King.

A student of the University City School District, she was a proud member of the graduating class of 1985. In 1986, Erna began a career as a professional driver. She drove school buses until 1998 when she joined the Bistate Development Agency/Metro St. Louis Transit Agency, from which she retired in 2021.

Most importantly, Erna loved spending time with her family. Her daughter Alysha De'Nise French and grandson CJ were the lights of her life. Erna shared her deep passion for gospel music with her older sister, Monica. I offer my deepest condolences on behalf of Missouri's First District to Erna's entire family and all those who loved her.

NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK AND BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the more than 160,000 Black-owned employer businesses in the U.S. during National Entrepreneurship Week.

Black businessowners experience pervasive barriers to accessing capital—more than any other demographic.

According to the Alliance for Entrepreneurial Equity, two-thirds of Black employers seek financing to expand business operations, yet half of them are denied loans and lines of credit.

Micael Habte is the owner of Upper Cup Coffee, an Eritrean-based coffee shop and wholesale coffee supplier located in the Old Towne East neighborhood of Columbus. Despite capital challenges due to COVID-19, today Micael is running two cafes, and a coffee kiosk, and has even expanded his roasting facility.

I'm proud of the fortitude businessowners like Micael have displayed, and I urge my colleagues to closely consider the challenges faced by Black entrepreneurs.

We must work together to build a stronger, more equitable economy for all.

GRATITUDE TO CITIZEN ADVOCATES

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to include in the RECORD an important article from consumer advocate, lawyer, and author Ralph Nader that celebrate the determination and courage of citizen activists like Nadia Milleron. Nadia's daughter, Samya Rose Stumo, tragically died in a plane crash when the defective Boeing 737 Max she was in, crashed in Ethiopia on March 10, 2019, killing all 156 people on board. Nadia was determined to fight for justice, and successfully pushed for action to ensure that the families of victims of such tragedies could collect punitive damages. Her story is an inspiration that should be read by all as a reminder that in our democracy, one person truly can make a difference.

THAT LADY FROM NEW ENGLAND WHO SHAMED US ALL

(Ralph Nader)

The mass media is reluctant to recognize civic heroes unless they display physical bravery such as rushing into a burning building to save a child. The media also lavishes vast coverage on sports heroes and entertainers.

● 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.

Unnoticed by the mass media was how it came about that the Illinois legislature, overcome by corporate lobbyists, passed legislation allowing punitive damages for wrongful death disasters, and sent the bill to Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker who signed it last Friday.

In the words of one state lawmaker, this effort started with “that lady from New England who drove down here (to Springfield, Illinois) and shamed us all.” That lady was my niece Nadia Milleron, who lost her daughter Samya Rose Stumo—an emerging leader in global health—to the defective Boeing 737 Max that crashed in Ethiopia on March 10, 2019, killing all 156 people on board. (Earlier on October 29, 2018, a similar also new Boeing 737 Max crashed off Indonesia’s coast, killing all 189 passengers and crew.)

Nadia was determined that families in the future who lost their loved ones to reckless corporate actions and crimes would not be told by Illinois courts that, were people rendered disabled, they could collect punitive damages—but not if their lives were taken. The cruel absurdity of this perverse rule that lets companies escape punitive damages under the law of torts (wrongful injuries) if their recklessness or greed kills their victims, but not if they injure them, was too much for Nadia to tolerate.

Driven by her love of Samya and her determination to end this gross injustice, she spent months away from her Massachusetts home in 2022 getting appointments with every Illinois Assembly person—177 of them—to plead her case in person. None of the naysayers she encountered in the lobbying circles around the legislature deterred her, not even some plaintiff trial lawyers.

By the sheer force of her legal and factual arguments, her moral authority and a few senior political advisors in Chicago, she laid the groundwork for action earlier last year. The Illinois Wrongful Death Act was championed by a young African-American state lawmaker, Rep. La Shawn K. Ford. Once it started moving through the Assembly (with little media attention) it gained momentum among the new Assembly leadership that carried through to the new leadership of the State Senate. Both legislative Houses are controlled by Democrats.

Nadia came to this challenge in Illinois, where the Stumo family civil tort litigation against Boeing is pending, with experience in battling the giant Boeing corporation’s power to get its way in Washington, DC. For months after Boeing’s homicides in Ethiopia (See, September 16, 2020, News Release from the House Committee on Transportation), Nadia and her husband Mike (both non-practicing lawyers), with the help of their two articulate sons, and other relentless, beaveread families, worked the corridors and offices of Congress, pressing for public hearings and legislation. Their efforts, punctuated by public demonstrations, culminated in the passage of federal legislation to start the process of strengthening air safety regulations.

The Stumos and their family network also focused on the derelict FAA which, over the years, had transformed itself from a supposed aviation safety regulator to a weak, consultant’s role. The agency literally delegated regulatory decisions and inspections to deputized Boeing employees on the factory floor and in the design offices. Boeing and other aircraft manufacturers made sure that Congress did not object and indeed had Congress facilitate this delegation, including by keeping the FAA’s regulatory budget and skilled staff too small to regulate directly and forcefully.

Nonetheless, with astute and newsworthy press conferences and accurate responsiveness to media inquiries, the families pushed

the FAA to be a little more hands-on and probing than it was up to 2019.

When the punitive damage bill passed the Illinois legislature, Governor Pritzker had 60 days to either sign it or let it become law. He chose to sign it on August 12th without any ceremony, without having Nadia, the young Assemblyman Ford and other senior state lawmakers by his side. Had he made it an event, he would have memorably conveyed the key motivating belief in a democracy—that one person can make a difference!

Citizen Nadia blazed the way, shaming the foot-dragging Illinois Trial Lawyers Association (ITLA) into jumping on the bandwagon in Springfield once the bill’s momentum grew.

On February 27, 2023, I wrote a letter to the President of the Illinois Trial Lawyers Association, Patrick A. Salvi II, wondering why the ITLA hadn’t pushed this initiative over many past years and urged them to “make the maximum effort to secure passage.” Trial Lawyer Associations do not usually answer letters, but this one got through, with copies to other interested parties. (See the letter here).

Our country, over time, has been helped immeasurably by outraged mothers (and fathers) turning their unabating mourning over the loss of their children into laser beam intensity behind health and safety laws to save other parents and children from similar tragedies. (Note e.g., Mothers Against Drunk Driving).

These civic heroes defy all odds to challenge and prevail. The odds don’t faze them; they have a higher calling to achieve.

Unfortunately, neither Governor Pritzker nor the mass media seized this dramatic moment for exemplary recognition. The law, however, now is on the books to further more humane and deterrent purposes, thanks “to that Lady from New England who shamed us all.”

REMEMBERING GEREMIAH LOFTON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember Geremiah Lofton—an intelligent, hardworking, and charismatic former member of my staff—who passed away on January 22, 2024.

A proud native of Port Arthur, Texas, Geremiah was the son of Gina and Kenneth Lofton, Sr. He graduated from Memorial High School and went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Huston-Tillotson University in Austin, Texas, a Historically Black College.

Dedicated to public service, Geremiah served as an intern at the Department of State during college and moved to Washington, D.C., after graduation. He joined the staff of the Committee on Homeland Security in 2019, first as an intern and later as a staff assistant and a committee clerk, while pursuing his master’s in public administration at The George Washington University.

After earning his master’s degree, Geremiah continued his congressional service by assisting the Select Committee on the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol.

Geremiah was an exemplary and engaging member of my staff. His work was excellent and his warm, kind personality won him many friends on the Committee and across Capitol Hill.

In 2022, Geremiah became special assistant and briefing book coordinator for the Secretary of Homeland Security, where he served for nearly 2 years as a valued member of the Department of Homeland Security team.

Geremiah was also active in the community, as a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, and Eastern Star Baptist Church in Port Arthur.

Geremiah left us too soon, and he will be greatly missed not only by his loved ones in Port Arthur but also his Capitol Hill family and friends. We are better for having known Geremiah and are grateful for his many contributions to the Committee, the community, and our country. My heartfelt sympathies and sincere condolences are with the Lofton family at this most difficult time.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MCINTIRE-STENNIS ACT DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA EQUALITY ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the McIntire-Stennis Act District of Columbia Equality Act, which would correct an apparent oversight in the exclusion of the District of Columbia from eligibility for funding under the McIntire-Stennis Act.

The Act provides the states and certain territories with formula funding to support state designated institutions’ cooperative forestry research programs. The funding available under this Act assists the states and territories in carrying out forestry research programs at state forestry schools and colleges and developing a trained pool of forest scientists capable of conducting needed forestry research.

District of Columbia residents pay full federal taxes and therefore District of Columbia is treated as a state under federal programs, with limited exceptions. The Act defines “State” to include Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam, whose residents do not pay full federal taxes. D.C.’s exclusion from the Act makes it ineligible for federal funding that would support research at D.C.’s public university, the University of the District of Columbia (UDC). The College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences at UDC, the nation’s only urban land-grant university, offers programs that complement D.C.’s ongoing forestry efforts and serve individuals in D.C. and beyond. Rectifying D.C.’s exclusion from the Act would ensure equal treatment for D.C. and provide UDC a fair share of resources.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING THE LIFE AND CAREER OF MARTIN “BO” BURKE

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of one of Connecticut’s great leaders in our state’s legal profession and government who sadly passed

recently, Mr. Martin “Bo” Byran Burke. A true gentleman, Bo represented thousands of clients, guiding them expertly through legal difficulty and, at times, crisis. The positive impact he made on countless individuals, families, and small businesses is incalculable. He also enthusiastically participated in politics and government out of both a sense of civic duty and his abiding devotion to our democracy and constitution.

Born in 1940 to Edmond and Francis Burke, Bo was a true son of New England. His passion for his community and region defined his life’s choices. After graduating from Colgate University with a Bachelor’s in English, Bo continued his studies as he pursued a Juris Doctor from Albany School of Law. Although Bo’s first foray into law was in New York State, he soon returned to his home state, passing the Connecticut Bar Exam in 1968.

Bo’s career as a lawyer was long, eventful, and widely respected. His work ethic was unparalleled, and he was modest about his accomplishments. His small-town practice in Vernon, Connecticut was always centered on representing people, not large institutional clients. Today that model might be viewed by some as out of date, but Bo knew that such representation is at the heart of the oath he took when he was admitted to the bar. Bo was also committed to improving the profession. Bo served on the Connecticut Judicial Review Council, the Connecticut Law Revision Commission, and the Committee on Government Administration and Policy and the Governor’s Commission on Judicial Reform. He additionally wrote for numerous law journals, such as the Connecticut Law Journal and the Connecticut Bar Journal. Bo opened his own practice in Vernon where he had immeasurable success. He focused on law, Title XIX, special needs, trusts, veterans’ benefits, probate, and real estate. He took upon immense responsibilities as he briefed and argued over 12 reported appellate cases. Bo was understood by those around him to be a wise and trustworthy lawyer due to his extensive experience and mastery of the law.

Bo applied his vast knowledge of law and government to an amazingly accomplished one term in the Connecticut General Assembly. In 1974 he ran and won the 56th Assembly seat, representing Vernon. In his single term, he took on the incredibly important and difficult task of writing our state’s freedom of information act. Opening state and local government to the press and public was extremely challenging. Yet, because of his diligent, talented ability to shape the bill and win consensus, the measure passed and was signed into law by Governor Ella Grasso. That law has withstood the test of time and still provides sunlight on the processes of government which is essential to a healthy democracy. After his two years of representation for the constituents of district 56, he decided to redirect his focus from elective office back to his law practice and town government. He transitioned to positions within the towns of Vernon and Rockville. For many years, he served both as Town Attorney and Assistant Town Attorney of Vernon. Bo endlessly served his town and state and was a champion of protecting democracy.

As someone who understood the opportunities created from receiving advanced education, Bo took it upon himself to improve and advocate for education with his town. Of

course, a big reason for his interest was his long and beautiful marriage to his talented wife Ellen, who taught hundreds and hundreds of children in the Vernon Public Schools. He served as counsel on the Vernon Education Foundation to being a member and Chairman on the Board of Trustees at the Rockville Public Library. Between Bo and Ellen, Vernon’s education standards remained high, which is part of the reason two schools received blue ribbon awards from the U.S. Department of Education, something which is a great source of pride in Vernon.

Bo’s career was one element of his multifaceted and exciting life. Since the mid-60s, he had been a continuous vacationer in Maine. For much of this time, he owned a camp on Flying Pond in Vienna, Maine. The days spent in Maine were calm and relaxing and gave Bo breaks from his demanding career as a lawyer.

It has been a great honor to personally know Bo. I met him when I was a young lawyer in Vernon many years ago and had the benefit of practicing law in the same community for many years. His example of strong advocacy and common-sense willingness to find common ground to settle disputes still resonates with me to this day. In 1986, I ran for the same seat he held in the general assembly and with his help, I was fortunate enough to prevail. He was always willing to provide counsel and advice which I deeply appreciated. Twenty years later he supported my election to the U.S. Congress, which was so special and meaningful to me.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to immortalize him today. He has been a great inspiration not just for me, but for his family, community, and beyond. His loss is deeply felt by his family members, including his wife, Ellen Schopfer Burke; his sons, Matthew, Jonathan, Andrew, and Sullivan Burke, and their wives; his sister, Susan Evans Burke, and his cousin Mary Jane Dempsey. He will also be missed by the community at large, which has seen many improvements directly due to Bo’s efforts and deep commitment to others. His deep and nuanced understanding of the law assisted many constituents in defending their rights as American citizens. I am grateful to know that Bo’s legacy will carry on within and beyond my district, as others follow in his footsteps.

RECOGNIZING BELVIN D. WARE
AND MACEDONIA MISSIONARY
BAPTIST CHURCH IN MACON,
GEORGIA

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the appointment of a dedicated servant leader and a true visionary for the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church of Macon, Georgia, Minister Belvin D. Ware. Minister Ware was elected by the church to serve as Head Pastor in December of 2023, and he was officially installed at the church on February 18, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.

A native of Macon, Georgia, Belvin D. Ware was born to the union of Denise T. Jones and Lawrence F. Ware, Jr. both of Macon, Georgia. Minister Ware completed his childhood

education in Macon and is a graduate of Central High School’s Class of 1996. He is currently in the process of completing a Bachelor of Science degree in Biblical Studies. Minister Ware is also a United States Marine, joining in 1998 and reaching the rank of Staff Sergeant (E6) where he served for over sixteen years before receiving an Honorable Discharge.

Minister Ware first accepted Christ at the young age of seven years old at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, and he accepted the call to ministry in December of 2012. He gave his initial sermon on September 29, 2013, at New Life Family Worship in Jacksonville, North Carolina where he also received his License of Ministry. In July of 2018, Minister Ware accepted a full-time position at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church as the Servant Leader of Children, Youth, and Young Adults. After one year of successfully mentoring the church’s youth and bringing them closer to the Lord, Lead Pastor Eddie Smith ordained Mr. Ware as a Minister of Gospel in October 2019 and named him Assistant to the Pastor.

During his tenure as Servant Leader of Children, Youth, and Young Adults, Minister Ware was responsible for evaluating, planning, and implementing a thorough course of action for the youth to grow in their faith. He facilitated Bible Study and Youth Church, oversaw the baptisms of eight young people and grew youth membership at Macedonia through outreach at local colleges and universities. Furthermore, Minister Ware has been instrumental in local community outreach—most notably his ministry at Bruce Elementary School where he visited at least twice a month to mentor at risk youths and facilitate two coat drives in which Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church donated over 250 winter coats to underprivileged youth. Following his efforts at the school, the Bibb County Board of Education selected Minister Ware to be a sitting member on the board to hire Bruce Elementary’s next principal. Additionally, as Assistant to the Pastor, Minister Ware began the process and coordinated training with Middle Georgia Food Bank to establish Macedonia as a local agency to establish a food bank on church grounds.

Minister Ware has been recognized numerous times for his professional achievements. He is a recipient of the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Certificate of Commendation, and Letter of Appreciation. He was recognized by the Middle-Georgia Black Pages as a Young Entrepreneur and Professional in 2019 and was also nominated for Leadership Macon in 2022, a year-long program that introduces a class of rising community leaders to the successes and challenges in Macon-Bibb County’s public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm once said that “Service is the rent that we pay for the space that we occupy here on this earth.” Belvin Ware has paid his rent many times over and still continues to give a prodigious amount of love and service back to his community. He is currently the Executive Director for Heal the Hood Empowering Movement, a community initiative to cure violence and to bring economic power back to the Macon community through mentoring, job placement, and prison reform. He is also a Co-founder of the Concord Project which is a partnership between the local clergy and the Bibb County Sheriff’s Office.

Minister Ware has accomplished many things in his life, but none of it would have been possible without the enduring love and support of his loving wife of over fifteen years, Aisha N. Ware, as well as his sons, Kingston Josiah and Kingsley Uriah.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with more than 765,000 people of Georgia's Second Congressional District, in recognizing and commending Minister Belvin D. Ware, on his continued service as the newly appointed Pastor of Macon, Georgia's Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church.

RECOGNIZING JOHN GRAHAM, JR.

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the late John Graham, Jr. as the committed family man he was and will continue to be in memory.

While at Poquoson High School, he won notable achievements such as: becoming Virginia's Boys State Representative, being elected President of his Senior class, and was a brilliant athlete. John was such a brilliant athlete he not only received the role of Captain his junior and senior years of high school, he also was recognized as "Little All American" during his football career in college. His drive to play and contribute to his teams got him inducted into the RMC Hall of Fame in 2015.

While working for NASA he was a fundamental contributor to groundbreaking missions. John was critical in developing and building the budding space program, even working alongside the original astronauts. He also held crucial roles in the development of the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo space programs.

Unfortunately, right before John was eligible to retire from NASA, he was confronted with a decision that would change his life forever. His father was fighting through a tough battle with pancreatic cancer and asked John to take over the family business in his stead.

Showing true sacrifice and dedication to his family, John decided to leave his career at NASA in order to preserve his family's seafood business: Graham & Rollins. Keeping the spirit of a true family business, John brought his children and wife Sandra Graham to work alongside him, further cementing how his family was always a top priority. As President of Graham & Rollins, John expanded the company threefold, leaving a family legacy to his children and grandchildren.

During his successful career within the family business, John also took the time to mentor his sons and grandsons in wrestling. Due to his mentorship, his sons were able to blossom in the sport and each hold notable records. With a renewed sense of love for the sport, John had a vision to expand the fan base of wrestling. That's why he helped create the Peninsula Wrestling Association as well as founding the Virginia Duals. He even went on to serve as the team leader for the Olympic wrestling team in 1988 and 1996. Due to his contributions to the sport, John was awarded the Order of Merit for the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and was inducted into both the Virginia Wrestling and Lower Peninsula Halls of Fame.

John will always be known for his devotion to his family, his love for sports, and his unwavering commitment to give back to his community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing John Graham, Jr. and to thank his wonderful family for giving me the pleasure of acknowledging him and recognizing the kindness he shared with the world around him.

CONGRATULATING ARTESIA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. TERESA LEGER FERNANDEZ

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Bulldogs Football Team from Artesia High School in New Mexico. In November 2023, the Bulldogs won their 32nd State Football Championship in Class 5A. That is unmatched by any other high school in the state of New Mexico. In fact, the Artesia Football Program has won more State Football Championships than any high school in the nation since 1950.

To win a state championship takes teamwork, persistence, and determination. It's a reflection of the commitment of the school leaders, coaches, parents, and everyone in the community. It's a reflection of the Bulldogs' players' ability to succeed in their future endeavors.

Let us enshrine the names of every member of the Artesia High School football team forever:

Matt Saiz, Grant Johnson, Porter Hardman, Gael Ruiz, Axel Hartley, Juan Diego Duran, Derrick Warren, Izac Cazares, Brody McDonald, Jaden Waldrip, Phillip Finley-Rascon, David Hammond, Josiah Rodriguez, Jaeden Hutson, Jesse Lerach, Diego Lopez, Frankie Galindo, Jarren Wadkins, Jesse Armendariz, Cael Houghtaling, Angelo Silvas, Andrew Rodriguez, Jaykob Ortega, Edel Villa, Jett Whitmire, Haden Harcrow, Joseph Martinez, Jeremiah Chavez, Miguel Soto, Nye Estrada, Kaden Zuniga, David Ybarra, Cody Johnson, Gabino Barrera, Jake Vandevender, Zach Wells, Hagan Crockett, Tootie McNeil, Xavyer Jagger, Ayden Huffman, Jesus Estrada, Omar Salais, Rafael Orozco, Steven Williams, Diego Wesson, Dylan Fisher, Ricardo Huerta, Saul Peralta, Francisco Caley, Kaden Grantham, Myka Aguirre, Juan Leon, Ivan Chacon, Adrian Ramirez, Edgar Canillo, Kellen Worley, Enrique Armendariz, Garret Fisher, Stephen Butts, Daeven Hutson, Manuel Calderon, Jackson Parker, Devyn Velasquez, Troy Tomsic, Carson Troost, Caleb Martin, Marco Soto, Daniel Aguilar, Joel Crosby, Caleb Murray, Crencicio Cuellar, Jonathan Gonzalez, Fernando Lira, Kaden Beauregard, Ethan Conn, Bryce Parra, Jacob Parrish, Jack Byars, Gavin Brown, Ulrich Medez, Santiago Esquibel, Jacob Calderon, Xavier Ramirez, Braylon Kinnibrugh, Kaiden Fredrickson, Andres Estrada, Yeudiel Salamanca, and Ricky Maesta.

Let us also remember the incredible work of the managers Max Klingshirm, Ryan Hickey, Jesus Ruiz, Matt Gage, and Kaiden Fredrickson as well as the coaches Jeremy Maupin, Jourdan Rodriguez, Jackson Bickel, Tony Jaramillo, Max Rodriguez, Derek Mon-

toya, Andy Lopez, and Cory Saxon. You're all great examples of the persevering spirit of New Mexico.

Go Bulldogs.

CELEBRATING WHIO-TV'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 75th anniversary of WHIO-TV, a leader in local news in my hometown of Dayton, Ohio.

WHIO was the first television station to begin broadcasting in Dayton, and has remained a CBS affiliate since that first broadcast. For nearly their entire history, WHIO has aired on Channel 7 in the Miami Valley and residents have routinely tuned in to the 'coverage they can count on.'

For three quarters of a century, WHIO has provided their audience with vital weather updates, local and national news coverage, and in-depth reports from their investigative unit, the I-Team. Our community also relies on Channel 7 for their sports coverage, faithfully airing both Bengals and Browns CBS games on Sundays.

The WHIO news team plays a vital role in keeping the Miami Valley informed and up to date on affairs that affect our everyday life. The Storm Center 7 weather team prepares viewers for their day, but also provides life-saving information when severe weather strikes. The news team holds business and government accountable to the citizens they serve, as well as informing viewers of local and national news stories.

Local journalism is a critical part of our community and is instrumental to our democratic experiment. WHIO embraces that responsibility and has established itself as a trusted news source for the Dayton area. I join the Miami Valley in saying thank you for a steadfast 75 years, looking forward to tuning in for many more.

RECOGNIZING MARK HAFNER

HON. BETH VAN DUYN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Keller City Manager, Mark Hafner, who is retiring after more than four decades of public service. At just 18 years old, Mr. Hafner started his career as a police officer. In 2001, he moved his family to Texas to lead the Keller Police Department as the Chief of Police. Under his watch, Keller's first Crime Control and Prevention District sales tax was passed, allocating a portion of the tax dollars toward ensuring public safety. Keller Police Department also earned its state and national accreditations and forged cutting-edge partnerships in 911 dispatch, animal services, detention, municipal court services, and policing with the cities of Colleyville, Roanoke, Southlake, and Westlake. He also oversaw two major police station expansions and renovation projects.

After 14 years as the Chief of Police, including three as Keller's Director of Public Safety, Mr. Hafner was promoted to the organization's top spot in June 2015 as the City Manager. In this position, he's overseen historic investments in public infrastructure, parks, and recreation amenities, helped attract vibrant commercial development, and worked to ensure Keller's long-term financial security. The new Keller Senior Activities Center and renovations to Fire Stations 2 and 3 were also completed under his tenure.

I Thank Mr. Hafner for all he has done to protect and serve the people of North Texas. His career has been marked by a commitment to excellence, service and innovation. I congratulate him on his well-deserved retirement, he will be missed.

HONORING THE LATE BILL BRAND

HON. TED LIEU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. LIEU. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of my friend, Bill Brand, Mayor of Redondo Beach. Mayor Brand passed away on Friday, February 9th at home alongside friends and family. He valiantly fought stage-four lung cancer over the past four and a half years, while remaining in office. He survived his specific cancer longer than any other diagnosed in the United States.

Bill Brand was born in Dallas, Texas, and moved to the South Bay region of Los Angeles County in 1966. He vividly remembered his first sight of the Seaside Lagoon and called it

"finding heaven." Bill dedicated his life to serving people. He saw the need to champion access to open space for South Bay residents and created a non-profit organization in 2004, the South Bay Parkland Conservancy, which is dedicated to the restoration, preservation, and public use of coastal land resources in the South Bay. This organization continues to grow and serve our coastal communities as a steward of our environment, carrying on Bill's legacy.

Bill Brand expanded on his work in public service, first as a Member of the Redondo Beach City Council, and finally as Mayor, a position he served until his last day. He was a fierce advocate for many environmental and coastal priorities, and it was a great honor to work with him to champion these issues.

Bill is survived by his loving wife, Deirdre. He served his community fervidly despite the difficulty of his condition. His tremendous will was a demonstration of his love and dedication for his community. He was a remarkable public servant, and it was a privilege to know him and call him a friend. May his memory live on in his many contributions to the community.

HONORING DON BLOOMER

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend, Mr. Don Bloomer, who is retiring after nearly 50 years of service at Citizens National Bank in Somerset, Kentucky. Over the last five dec-

ades, Don has been a trusted leader in the Lake Cumberland area, dedicating countless hours of volunteer service to other community entities, and helping local families and businesses reach or exceed their financial goals.

Raised on a small farm in Pulaski County, Don knew the value of hard work and loyalty from an early age. His life's dream was to be a successful citizen in his hometown community and a strong family man, both of which he has accomplished through diligent work and compassion.

Don first arrived at Citizens National Bank as a Management Trainee in 1976, under the guidance of former bank president Clay Davis. From there he climbed the banking ladder as auditor, comptroller, and cashier, until he was promoted to President and CEO in 2007, where he has guided the bank and the local community through unexpected changes in technology and financial shifts ever since. Clay encouraged Don to learn every aspect of the industry through advanced educational opportunities, strengthening the future of the institution he serves and the local community.

May his life's story be an inspiration to our aspiring youth who hope to one day follow in Don's footsteps, working hard from the family farm to become the local bank president in their hometown. We can all make a difference in our communities, like Don Bloomer, with a tireless work ethic and sheer resolve to make this region a better place to live.

My wife Cynthia and I deeply appreciate the loyal friendship of Don and Rhonda Bloomer, and we wish them the most joyful years of retirement in the years ahead.