

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## RECOGNIZING ANGEL COOK

### HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions made in our community by one of my constituents, Angel Cook. Angel is an esteemed member of the community with a huge heart for at-risk youth and a duty to serve beyond measure. For the past 15 years, Angel has committed time, effort, and energy to support the RAP House in New Port Richey and more specifically, the runaway, homeless and foster youth that reside in the shelter. RAP serves an average of 200 youth every year which means that Angel has touched the lives of over 3,000 children.

What drives Angel's dedication and passion is her extraordinary personal story and relationship with RAP House. Growing up in a troubled home, Angel eventually found her way to RAP where she resided off and on for some time. Angel does not hesitate to share how RAP "saved her life" and helped her envision a positive and productive future despite the odds. As an ambassador for RAP, Angel has been a part of the Rap River Run (RRR) committee, raising well over \$300,000 since 2016 to support RAP in meeting the needs of youth in crisis. These funds are crucial to support operations and services at RAP including counseling, tutoring, clothing, and extra-curricular activities. Additionally, Angel has been the RAP Queen of Christmas for over 10 years, gathering youth Christmas wishes and making sure they are fulfilled every year. And what an amazing effort this is. Each child creates a list of 10 wishes and Angel works with the community to make it happen, including a wrapping party to ensure the gifts have a personal touch. The looks on the faces of the kids when they see they were remembered at Christmas and their wishes fulfilled is the touch of magic Angel consistently delivers. One of the true "doers" in the community, Angel seems to always be organizing fundraisers and community events to better the lives of others. She helps coordinate annual parades and is involved in numerous local non-profits. She truly is an angel—touching the lives of those she serves.

It is clear that Ms. Cook has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for her service.

## HONORING BRINSON FUNERAL HOME

### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a long-standing family business, Brinson Funeral Home.

Brinson Funeral Home is a cherished family-owned establishment in Cleveland, MS. Brinson Funeral Home has been a beacon of compassion, affordability, and unwavering care since its founding in 1939 by the late Booker T. and Ruby Brinson. Their legacy of considerate and attentive funeral services spans over eight decades and several generations.

Brinson Funeral Home remains steadfast in its commitment to providing excellent service during people's most vulnerable moments. Their unwavering dedication continues to honor an incredible legacy. Brinson Funeral Home is recognized as one of the first Black-owned businesses in the State of Mississippi. It has remained true to its founding principles and honored its incredible legacy by continuing to provide excellent service in helping people during their most vulnerable times.

Recently, it received well-deserved recognition from Delta State University's "Winning The Race" organization, in collaboration with the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors and the Amzie Moore House. This esteemed recognition celebrates Brinson Funeral Home's historic significance as one of the first established Black-owned businesses in the state.

The compassionate, dedicated, and professional associates treat each family as their own and are available to assist every step of the way during the funeral/memorial planning process. The business mottos, "Our Family Serving Your Family" and "The Home That Service Built," reflect their commitment. Members of their staff are like family, with some serving the funeral home for over 20 years. As a family business, Brinson Funeral Home also gives back to the community by donating a portion of proceeds earned from all funeral services to a charitable organization dedicated to uplifting and improving the community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Brinson Funeral Home, a steadfast beacon of vision, fueled by compassion, unwavering commitment, and a deep sense of duty. For years, it has faithfully served Bolivar County, neighboring counties, and the entire State of Mississippi.

## HONORING MICHAEL DONATO

### HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Michael Donato for his service at Fort Pulaski National Monument.

Michael began working for the National Park Service in Washington, D.C. as a park guide. In 2021, Michael moved to Savannah, Georgia to become an Administrative Officer at Ft. Pulaski.

He was promoted to the Chief of Business Management and Operations in 2023.

In just a few years, Michael has contributed greatly to the park's organization and develop-

ment while coordinating beneficial partnerships for the park.

His partnership with the Friends of the Cockspur Island Lighthouse helped relight the historic lighthouse. He also worked with Chat-ham County to enhance the facilities at the Lazaretto Creek Boat Ramp.

Michael has taken a new position back in D.C. as Chief of Staff for National Capital Parks East, but his contributions will serve as a reminder of his public service for generations to come.

## HONORING THE CRITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MR. JOHN A. COLEMAN

### HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. John A. Coleman's leadership and service on the Board of the East Bay Municipal Utility District and as Executive Director of the Bay Planning Coalition. For his career of public service and leadership, Mr. Coleman is receiving the 2024 Lafayette Citizen of the Year Award.

A lifelong resident of Lafayette, California, Mr. Coleman demonstrated his commitment to his community at a young age. Even as a high school student, Mr. Coleman believed he could make a positive difference in the world. He spearheaded efforts to encourage civic participation among his fellow students and founded the Rossmoor Gardening Club, which continues to serve the Lafayette community today.

Mr. Coleman is the longest-serving board member at the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). For 33 years, Mr. Coleman served as an elected Director of EBMUD, representing Lafayette constituents and leading efforts to make the Lafayette Reservoir recreation area more accessible for the community. His policy guidance on EBMUD's water supply and critical leadership as President and Vice-President of the Board of Directors well positioned EBMUD to handle future drought and climate crisis challenges.

In addition to Mr. Coleman's vital work with EBMUD, he served as Chief Executive Officer of the Bay Planning Coalition, a non-profit organization. For 13 years, Mr. Coleman advanced the essential mission of the Bay Planning Coalition to ensure that commerce, recreation, and the natural environment thrive in the San Francisco Bay-Delta region. He is also the only individual in the California water and wastewater communities to have served as President of both the Association of California Water Agencies and the California Association of Sanitation Agencies.

Mr. Coleman's extensive leadership and service to California ensure that he will thrive in his new role as Manager of Natural Resources with the Calaveras County Water District. His talent for coalition building and critical

• 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.

knowledge of California's environmental resources will undoubtedly continue to enhance the lives of California residents.

While his presence on the Board of the East Bay Municipal Utility District will surely be missed, Mr. Coleman's decades of service reflect the very best of our community's leaders and will continue to improve the lives of citizens for many years to come. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for Mr. Coleman's dedication and commitment to public service. I wish him the best in his future role with the Calaveras County Water District.

IN MEMORY OF MRS. ADA M.  
JACKSON LEE

**HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a devoted wife, loving mother, doting grandmother, community servant, and Civil Rights icon, Mrs. Ada M. Jackson Lee. Family, friends, and community leaders commemorated the sixth anniversary of her passing and celebrated what would have been her 100th birthday on April 6, 2024, at Ada Lee Park in Warner Robins, Georgia.

The journey of the remarkable life of Ada Lee began on March 6, 1924, when she was born to the union of the late Mr. Lewis D. Jackson and the late Mrs. Annie B. Jackson in Wellston, Georgia.

A lifelong and persistent learner, Mrs. Lee graduated from Booker T. Washington High School and the Culinary Arts Program at The Fort Valley State University. She went on to work as an Urban Renewal specialist where she later retired.

She was married to the late Sylvester Lee and to this union three children were born. Daron Lewis Lee, Vircy Anne Ferguson and Dorothea Rita Scott. Mrs. Lee was a woman after God's own heart who served her community with distinction and pride. "It has been said that service is the rent that we pay for the space that we occupy here on this earth." Mrs. Lee paid her rent, and she paid it well. She was nothing short of a trailblazer with several historic firsts for the Warner Robins community—first Director of the Warner Robins Day Care Center, she formed the first Girl Scout Troop for African American girls and the first Director of the Head Start Program in Warner Robins.

When Mrs. Lee saw a need in the community, she made sure that it was addressed. When she saw a need for a safe space for children to play, she approached the mayor and made it happen. Now that same park is named in her honor. She was a strong advocate for her community and for women. She truly believed in the words of Shirley Chisholm, "If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair." Because of her lifetime of service, she was recognized with many awards to include The Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis for Outstanding Volunteer Services, The NAACP Trailblazer Award, Ms. Senior Warner Robins as well as one of the fifty Influential Women in Middle Georgia.

She gave her time, talent, and treasure to many organizations to include Board Member of the Family Support Alliance for the Mentally

Ill, Warner Robins Housing Authority, Houston County Democratic Advisory, Warner Robins Day Care Center, NAACP, SCLC and served as a member of the Christian Women United Association and the Georgia Council on Human Relations. She was also an honorary member of the Order of Eastern Star, Cinderella Chapter No. 406.

But more important than all of these accolades and memberships, Mrs. Lee was a woman of faith. A dedicated member of the Warner Robins Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Mrs. Lee was a member of stewardess board, missionary board, Lay Council, We Care-Golden Age, Social Concerns Hospitality Circle and served as Founder of the Pastor's Aide Board. The scripture tells us in Proverbs 3:6 that "In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths." The Lord truly directed the paths of Mrs. Ada Jackson Lee. The Middle Georgia Community, The State of Georgia, our country, and the world are better because Mrs. Lee passed this way.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me, and my wife Vivian, and the 765,000 people of Georgia's Second Congressional District in honoring the life and legacy of Mrs. Ada Jackson Lee. May her life continue to be an inspiration to her family, friends, and all those that she touched during her remarkable life.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SHARON  
RATLIFF-GROSS

**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life of an outstanding civil servant, Sharon Ratliff-Gross, who passed on April 2, 2024. She dedicated 37 years of her life to federal service and specialized in workforce planning, recruitment, and diversity at the U.S. Department of Labor. Before Mrs. Ratliff-Gross retired in 2010, she received several Secretary's Exceptional Achievement awards to recognize her work at the Department of Labor.

But family was the greatest joy for Mrs. Ratliff-Gross. Family members referred to her as "Ma 2," and it became the cherished name by which she was known. When her grandson was born, the nickname was shortened to "TuTu." Mrs. Ratliff-Gross loved to travel on cruises, play cards, attend church plays, and watch her favorite shows on television. One of her greatest joys was time spent with her husband. Mrs. Ratliff-Gross loved to join her husband on trips to the barbershop, grocery store, casino, and anywhere else in the neighborhood. She loved to bake and was known for her delicious sweet potato pie, pretzel salad, and brownies. In her spare time, she created her special "money cakes" and gifted them to friends and family for birthdays and retirements.

In addition, she was renowned for her efforts to support cancer survivors and others who struggled with the disease. Mrs. Ratliff-Gross dedication to life helped her conquer Breast cancer twice. She served as a beacon of hope for local women who needed comfort and encouragement to deal with their difficult cancer diagnosis. Even today, she is an inspiring figure who showed hundreds of local

women there is life and recovery after a Breast cancer diagnosis.

Mrs. Ratliff-Gross left an indelible mark on everyone who was fortunate enough to meet and know her as a wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, mentor, or friend. She made a difference in countless lives with her infectious smile, laughter, and caring spirit. She cherished her family and friends with all her heart and embraced life with love and vitality. Her legacy of love and resilience will live on in the cherished memories of all those she touched.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating Mrs. Ratliff-Gross' life of public service and extend the deepest condolences to her beloved family and friends during this difficult time.

CONGRESSIONAL PATRIOT AWARD  
FOR DR. JAMES HURLEY

**HON. PAT FALLON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. James Hurley of Stephenville, Texas, and present him with the Congressional Patriot Award. Since 2019, Dr. Hurley has served as the 16th President of Tarleton State University and dedicated himself to serving and uplifting North Texas students.

As a first-generation college graduate, Dr. Hurley understood the financial challenges that students face when it comes to obtaining an education. As such, he partnered with many schools and colleges in Texas to provide qualified students with guaranteed scholarships to Tarleton. Under Dr. Hurley's leadership, Tarleton has transformed into one of the nation's fastest-growing universities that is renowned for excellent academic, enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. It has also been ranked as a high research institution and is among the top 4 percent of universities in the United States to have received this designation.

Moreover, Dr. Hurley launched the President's Excellence in Research Scholars program to provide direct funding for student research initiatives and promote creativity, innovation, and breakthroughs in research. He serves on several governing boards to address costs in higher education, expand economic development, and shape public policy to benefit students. In 2022, the North Texas Commission granted Dr. Hurley the prestigious Education Leadership Award for his work and impact on our community. I am proud of Dr. Hurley's continued efforts to make a difference in students' lives and lead them to success.

It is an honor to bestow Dr. Hurley with the Patriot Award for his exceptional service to our Nation and the people of North Texas.

RECOGNIZING DR. JOHN HAMIL

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions

of one of my constituents, Dr. John Hamil, who has partnered with CARES Senior Health Clinic to treat its dermatology patients for more than ten years. The doctor and his team treat all skin conditions, including skin cancers. Their work has often been lifesaving.

Dr. Hamil and his colleagues who volunteer to serve this vulnerable population are making a profound impact on the lives of the patients they serve. Each of these volunteers have servant hearts, and their dedication to our community is impressive. It is said that a society can be judged by how well it treats its most vulnerable citizens. These medical professionals go above and beyond to ensure none of the patients seeking help at CARES Senior Center fall through the cracks.

It is clear that Dr. John Hamil and his fellow volunteers have made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for their service.

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HONORING SOUTHERN  
OPPORTUNITY FOUNDATION

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable organization, Southern Opportunity Foundation.

The Southern Opportunity Foundation is a non-profit dedicated to positive change in the South. The Southern Opportunity Foundation organization offers a range of impactful programs designed to address social and economic disparities in the Southern region. From education and workforce development to healthcare access and community empowerment, we strive to make a lasting difference.

The Southern Opportunity Foundation healthcare programs are designed to break down barriers to access, providing essential services and support to underserved communities across the Southern region. From preventive care and health education to facilitating access to medical resources, we are dedicated to promoting a culture to wellness and resilience.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Southern Opportunity Foundation for their dedication and tenacity to serving their community and desire to be an example for all.

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HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY, MS.  
CAROL COUCH

**HON. KAT CAMMACK**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mrs. CAMMACK. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Florida's Third Congressional District, I wish Ms. Carol Couch a very happy 100th birthday.

Carol has always been known for her confident and strong personality. Carol joined the U.S. Army in April 1942 and was assigned to 1612th SCU Sta Comp WAC Det in Washington, D.C. While there, Carol worked to decode enemy messages which was then a top-secret job. After World War II, Carol and her husband Edgar Cox were honorably dis-

charged, and they packed all their belongings, including three young children, into a truck to move to Florida.

After opening a collections bureau, her plans changed and Carol drew up plans to build a million-dollar building providing office space to professionals, including doctors and dentists. Her husband thought her plans too ambitious and attempted to stop her, but Carol went to the courthouse and had herself declared separate from her husband so she could continue without his permission.

A woman of many interests, Carol became partner in a road construction company, oversaw the construction of her home, worked with doctorate students to form their thesis papers at the University of Florida, and maintained a multitude of hobbies. She even worked for 15 years at the University of Florida as a typist with an incredible speed of 120 correct words per minute.

In her later years, Carol worked for the Census Bureau and volunteered at Grace United Methodist Church, Friends of the Library, and several other organizations. Carol gradually bowed out of these responsibilities and gave up driving in her early 90s. Of all she accomplished, however, being a veteran was her favorite accomplishment, and she always drove with an American flag in the back windshield.

For the last several decades, Carol has made her home in North Central Florida, and has been a treasured member of several veterans' groups. I am honored to wish her a happy 100th birthday on May 22, 2024, and to thank her for her dutiful service to our Nation. I Congratulate her on this milestone. I am elated to celebrate with her.

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HONORING THE EDINA HIGH  
SCHOOL BOYS' HOCKEY TEAM

**HON. ILHAN OMAR**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Edina High School Boys' Hockey Team, who won the Class AA state championship in the Minnesota State High School Hockey Tournament.

This year's win marks Edina's 14th state championship overall, and second championship in five years. The team, led by head coach Curt Giles, finished the regular season with an impressive record of 20 wins, 4 losses, and 1 tie. In the postseason, the team earned another five wins in order to secure their spot in the championship game against Chanhassen High School. The championship game was incredibly competitive, and especially meaningful for Edina—who fell just short of the title in 2023. Chanhassen took the lead with a goal at the end of the second period and held it until Edina defenseman Robbie Hoch scored a goal to tie the game in the third period. A few minutes later, Edina senior Bobby Cowan scored the winning goal on a power play. Cowan's goal clinched the championship for the team, who won the game 2–1, in front of more than 20,000 spectators. The win would not have been possible without the phenomenal efforts of goalie Joey Betram, who had more than 30 saves.

I am so impressed with the hard work that these students put in on the road to the state

championship game, and I am especially proud to see them take home the title for their school. While some members of the team will continue playing for Edina next year, I know that others are graduating and stepping into life after high school. Whether those graduates choose to continue playing hockey or not, I have no doubt that the lessons they learned on this team will be immensely helpful in their lives ahead.

I'd also like to recognize all of the parents, teachers, school support staff, and team staff who worked to help this team succeed in every game that they played on their way to the championship. This level of success does not come without support, and we are lucky to have a community that is so invested in helping young people achieve in their endeavors outside of school.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Edina High School Boys' Hockey Team on their state championship title and recognizing all of the hard work that it took to get there.

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RECOGNIZING GERALD MULLIGAN

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions made in our community by one of my constituents, Gerald Mulligan. "Gerry" as he is lovingly referred to, is a prominent figure in Citrus County, known for his dedication to community development and service. As the former Publisher of the Citrus County Chronicle, Gerry has used his platform to advocate for various causes over the years, notably the establishment of a YMCA in the area. His commitment to this project spans back to the 1990s, and he played a pivotal role in its development. His tireless efforts as a volunteer, advocate, and community leader are highlighted by his co-chairing the capital campaign committee to build a YMCA in Citrus County, which successfully raised over \$8 million in four years, allowing the YMCA to be built without incurring any debt. Being so engaged and associated with so many in the community, Gerry Mulligan played a role as a connector in nearly every relationship the YMCA established during the capital campaign. His leadership roles, including serving as the first Advisory Council Chair of the Citrus Memorial Health Foundation YMCA (where he continues to serve as a Council member today) and serving on the YMCA of the Suncoast's Board of Directors, highlight his commitment to the YMCA and the community. You can often find Gerry at any of the special events at the Y, as he continues to be an active YMCA member and volunteer. Gerry's involvement in the community extends beyond his role at the YMCA. He actively engages in numerous volunteer efforts and civic organizations, including the Rotary Club of Crystal River and a founder of the United Way in Citrus County. Gerry's civic contributions have been widely recognized, as evidenced by his induction into the Florida Newspaper Hall of Fame and his recognition as Citizen of the Year for Citrus County in 2021. Gerry Mulligan's leadership, support, and advocacy create a lasting legacy in Citrus County. In addition to the work he continues to do with the

YMCA in Citrus County, his multifaceted involvement across various sectors demonstrates his dedication to making his community a better place for its residents. Gerry's work as a community champion continues to earn him the admiration of his fellow citizens and the well-deserved recognition.

It is clear that Mr. Mulligan has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for his service.

#### HONORING SILVESTER TATUM

#### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the accomplishments of Command Sergeant Major Silvester Tatum, retiring from Mississippi Army National Guard with over 42 years of military service. A devoted husband and father, he has spent his entire career working parallel business and army professions, serving as the embodiment of a Citizen-Soldier. He has executed a lifetime of achievements in education, military discipline and training, assignments, commands, and missions that are remarkable and historical.

Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Tatum is decorated with the Legion of Merit, the Combat Infantry Badge, and many other awards and honors. He served in many tactical, operational, and strategic assignments, including two overseas combat tours to the Middle East. His career culminated with his selection as the first African American Senior Enlisted Leader of the Mississippi National Guard on 1 April 2021. In this role, CSM Tatum has faithfully and impartially discharged the unique duties of his assignment with excellence. CSM Tatum serves as the principal advisor to the Adjutant General of Mississippi on all matters pertaining to providing a ready enlisted force, health of the force, and enlisted professional development of more than 13,000 Citizen Soldiers, Airmen, State employees, and federal technicians. Areas of focus are to ensure the force is equipped and trained to respond to any contingency, natural or manmade.

From Rolling Fork, Mississippi, Tatum enlisted in the Mississippi National Guard in 1981, has served as one of the most influential senior enlisted leaders our ranks have ever witnessed, maintaining the highest standards during the most dynamic and complex times in history. CSM Tatum is a true American hero and a proud Mississippian who always placed the needs of others before his own; I am immensely grateful for his dedication to our country and to the State of Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Command Sergeant Major Silvester Tatum for his dedication to serve the state of Mississippi and his country.

COMMEMORATING THE 325TH ANNIVERSARY OF VAISAKHI AND THE LEGACY OF GURU GOBIND SINGH JI

#### HON. THOMAS R. SUOZZI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 325th anniversary of Vaisakhi on April 13, 2024, and the legacy of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, who espoused the values that we as Americans cherish, including liberty, equality, and religious freedom.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji founded the Khalsa community in 1699, and its sole purpose has been upholding the dignity and human rights of everyone, regardless of their nationality, race, religion, or social status. Sikhism teaches that all human beings are inter-connected as one human family, with one Creator who lives through everyone. Sikhism also teaches that every person has innate dignity and deserves to be treated with respect and kindness. Guru Gobind Singh Ji taught that the highest form of worship is to love and care for humanity. For this reason, the Khalsa community cares for God's creation without any distinction.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji preached his belief in pluralism and freedom of conscience during a time of religious intolerance. He lived by a maxim that captures one of Voltaire's philosophies. "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." His father, Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, adhered to the same principles and was even executed because he protested the government's forced removal of the Janeu, the sacred thread. Even though as a Sikh, Guru Teg Bahadur Ji himself did not believe in wearing the Janeu, he protested for the right of Hindus to wear it. He was executed because he refused to give up this principle when given an ultimatum by the intolerant monarchy of his time.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji followed in the footsteps of his father and promoted interfaith dialogue. Not only would Guru Gobind Singh Ji build Sikh Gurudwaras, but he also built Muslim Mosques and Hindu Mandirs. When asked which religion he felt is the most excellent, Guru Gobind Singh Ji would respond "Just as my faith is the most excellent for me, yours is the most excellent for you." He taught that religious labels do not matter in God's eyes.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji was also a major proponent of education and women's rights. He was an intellectual who authored many influential works and poetry that is still read today. Much of his poetry is included in the Sikh prayers. He encouraged people of all identities and backgrounds to study, which was very rare at the time. Women were given the equal rights to become soldiers in the Khalsa army, which was an army comprised completely of volunteers. According to Sikh writer Bhai Vir Singh Ji, Guru Gobind Singh Ji taught that "it is a sin to be cruel, but it is a bigger sin to tolerate cruelty." This was during a time where being religious meant that you left society to primarily focus on meditation. Guru Gobind Singh Ji taught abandoning a suffering world in the name of religion is selfishness disguised as prayer. He preached that religiosity meant fighting against cruelty and uplifting the downtrodden.

Regarding issues of war and peace, the Khalsa army adhered to a humanitarian code fostered by the Guru Gobind Singh Ji. They were outnumbered in every battle they fought, yet their spirit was unmatched. Wars were only fought for human rights. Battles were often fought to rescue young girls who were kept as slaves and forced to leave their religion. Sikhs would make sure to not only give food, water, and first aid to their soldiers but also to enemy soldiers. No land was ever conquered, no loot taken, and no prisoners of war were ever caught. Additionally, all the Khalsa army arrows had gold on them. This was to make sure that if an enemy soldier was injured, they could afford treatment, and if they died their family was not left penniless. Guru Gobind Singh Ji's own sons fought on the front lines of the battlefield. All four of his sons gave their lives fighting. His younger two sons were captured and executed at age 7 and 9, along with his elderly mother. Guru Gobind Singh Ji and the Khalsa army sacrificed everything in the name of freedom.

When a Sikh decides to become a part of the Khalsa community they go through the baptism ceremony called the Amrit Sanchar. They vow to serve humanity and fight for social justice. They also give up all ties to caste. Guru Gobind Singh fought against the caste system because he believed it undermined the principle of unconditional human equality. The Khalsa of yesterday fought as soldiers on the battlefield. The Khalsa of today fights for justice as teachers, doctors, lawyers, and political activists. They are very much a part of the American fabric and embody the spirit of freedom.

The Khalsa community serves humanity in their Gurudwaras, the Sikh place of worship. Gurudwaras feed thousands a day in their free kitchens called "langars." This practice was founded on the belief that no human should ever go hungry. These community kitchens are places where people from all cultures and religions are welcome to eat for free. The community has taken the concept of selfless service to great heights and continues to provide free humanitarian aid in natural disasters all around the world. By creating the Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh Ji broke all barriers and united the human race, as one family. Today, the Third Congressional District of New York joins the Sikh community in celebrating Khalsa Sajna Diwas and honors the contributions that Sikhs have made to the District and the Nation.

#### HONORING THERESA SULLIVAN FOR RECEIVING THE MALCOLM BALDRIGE QUALITY AWARD

#### HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Theresa Sullivan, the CEO of Samaritan Healthcare in Moses Lake, Washington for winning a Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award for healthcare. The Baldrige Quality Award is the highest formal recognition given by the President of the United States for performance excellence.

Samaritan Healthcare is a hospital that provides vital services for our rural communities

in Central Washington. There, Theresa has fostered a community focused on providing exemplary care through patient, provider, and staff satisfaction. Prior to her leadership at Samaritan, she served on various executive boards for hospitals in Washington State where she shared her exemplary standards for leadership and management.

I am honored to represent Theresa, and sincerely thank her for her work providing critical healthcare services to the constituents of the Fourth District of Washington and for inspiring innovation in the healthcare field.

#### HONORING THE MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR CULTURAL PRODUCTION

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Mississippi Center for Cultural Production. The organization has gone beyond the call of duty to ensure that rural communities in Mississippi are taken care of and their stories are told.

The Mississippi Center for Cultural Production, also known as "Sipp Culture," is an approach and resource for cultivating thriving communities. Based in the rural South, Sipp Culture is honoring the history and building the future of rural Hinds County, especially in the Town of Utica, MS.

Sipp Culture supports community development from the ground up through cultural production focused on self-determination and agency designed by them and for them. The organization believes that history, culture, and food affirm our individual and collective humanity. Their goal is to strengthen the local food system, advance health equity, and support rural artistic voices—while activating the power of story—all to promote the legacy and vision of Utica, MS.

At the core of it all is the unwavering belief that gathering and sharing local stories is the best way to support safe and thriving communities for the future. Honoring growth, story, and imagination is an approach that can cultivate healthy and equitable places everywhere. For Sipp Culture, it all starts in Utica. I firmly believe the work Sipp Culture has done for the communities in Hinds County can be a model for what should be done for rural communities all across the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing The Mississippi Center for Cultural Production for their service to the citizens of Mississippi.

#### RECOGNIZING DR. THEODORE FOTOPoulos

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions of one of my constituents, Dr. Theodore Fotopoulos who has partnered with CARES

Senior Health Clinic to treat its dermatology patients for more than ten years. These healthcare providers treat all skin conditions, including skin cancers. Their work has often been lifesaving.

Dr. Fotopoulos and his colleagues who volunteer to serve this vulnerable population are making a profound impact on the lives of the patients they serve. Each of these volunteers have servant hearts, and their dedication to our community is impressive. It is said that a society can be judged by how well it treats its most vulnerable citizens. These medical professionals go above and beyond to ensure none of the patients seeking help at CARES Senior Center fall through the cracks.

It is clear that Dr. Fotopoulos and his fellow volunteers have made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for their service.

#### CONGRATULATING DR. MARCUS SCOTT IV

**HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. Marcus Scott IV.

Dr. Scott has been nominated as one of the finalists for the Georgia Association of Secondary School Principal's Principal of the Year award. Dr. Scott earned a B.S. in middle school education from Armstrong Atlantic State University. He later earned a master's degree in school administration from Cambridge College.

During his 22 years of service, he has worked as an educator and administrator in Liberty, Glynn, and Chatham County. Out of these 22 years, he has spent 18 years in an administrative role.

Currently, Dr. Scott works as the principal of Lee Roy Myers Middle School in Savannah. He is also a radio host, a youth group president, and a Liberty County school board member. He has helped lead new efforts in improving the performance of students with the school receiving accolades for remarkable improvement.

Dr. Scott congratulates his colleagues on helping him receive such an honor, and we all wish him the best of luck when the finalist for Principal of the Year is selected.

#### RECOGNIZING MAURA CURRAN

**HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Maura Curran as she concludes her service on the Scituate Select Board. For over two decades, Maura Curran has served as a pillar of the Scituate community, serving on the Scituate School Committee, the Advisory Committee, and for the past decade, on the Select Board. Maura's parents, the late Samuel and Mary Cavanaugh Cashman, instilled in their daughter to never hesitate to stand up for her beliefs as long as she was respectful in her disagreements. Maura has pointed to this

as the greatest lesson she learned from her parents, and the people of Scituate have benefited greatly from this guiding principle throughout her service to their town.

A tireless advocate for the Scituate Public Schools, Maura stepped up and successfully ran for a position on the School Committee in 2005. Throughout her term on the School Committee, Maura worked with her colleagues to maintain the quality of education in Scituate in the face of economic challenges.

As her tenure on the School Committee came to a close, Maura once again stepped up to serve the town on the Advisory Committee, working countless evenings to ensure that Town Meeting attendees were adequately prepared for Annual and Special Town Meetings.

In 2014, Maura was elected to fill an unexpired term on what was then known as the Board of Selectmen. For the first time in twelve years there was a woman on the Board. By the end of the decade, the Board was renamed the Select Board by Town Meeting and its members were majority female for the first time in history.

Under Maura's leadership on the Select Board, Scituate built a new public safety building, senior center, athletic field complex, and the Gates Middle School. Additionally, the town renovated its library and saw significant investments in replacing and improving water and sewer infrastructure.

Not seeking re-election this spring, Maura will step down from the Select Board after ten years of dedicated service. However, the work that Maura accomplished during her time on the Scituate Select Board, School Committee, and Advisory Board will leave a lasting impact for many years to come. The Town of Scituate has benefited greatly from the sacrifices made by Maura, her husband Sean, and their daughters Lindsay and Samantha, as they worked around her attendance at Monday night School Committee meetings, Tuesday night Select Board meetings, and Thursday night Advisory Committee meetings.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Maura Curran, and I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing her steadfast commitment to public service and the people of Scituate.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF LIEUTENANT COMMANDER ISSAC L. BELTON

**HON. SHARICE DAVIDS**

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Lieutenant Commander Issac L. Belton. Throughout his distinguished career, LCDR Belton demonstrated exceptional leadership and a tireless devotion to the defense of his Nation. His expertise and dedication were instrumental in shaping the next generation of naval personnel and ensuring the readiness of our forces.

LCDR Belton's service to our country began with his enlistment in the United States Navy in 1988 following his high school graduation from Rosa Fort High School in Tunica, Mississippi. He served aboard various commands, including the USS *Raleigh*, USS *Donald B. Beary*, and USS *Eisenhower*, where he developed his skills as a Boiler Technician.



In 2000, after twelve years of exemplary service as an enlisted sailor, LCDR Belton was commissioned as an Ensign. As a Naval Officer, he continued to serve with distinction aboard several vessels including the USS *Saipan*, USS *Tortuga*, USS *John Paul Jones*, and USS *Kearsarge*. His roles varied from Auxiliary Systems Officer to Main Propulsion Officer, showcasing his versatility and leadership abilities. His contributions extended beyond the confines of individual commands, as he served as a Training Center Administrator, Master Training Specialist, and Surface Warfare Officer, among other roles.

After 28 years of honorable and dedicated service, LCDR Belton retired from active duty, but his work did not stop there. In 2018, LCDR Belton founded Course Correction LLC, a service-disabled veteran owned small business which specializes in financial literacy education, leadership training, and contract management. His legacy of excellence continues to inspire and guide those who follow in his footsteps.

LCDR Belton passed away unexpectedly on February 12, 2024. In addition to his remarkable career, LCDR Belton's life was marked by love and commitment. Issac was married to Kansas City, Kansas native Lieutenant Commander Anjail Belton, also a retired Naval Officer. Together they have four adult children. They recently finalized the adoption of six of their grandchildren on December 20, 2023.

It is with great pride and gratitude that I recognize the outstanding service and life of Lieutenant Commander Issac L. Belton. His numerous awards and decorations, including the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, and Combat Action Ribbon, attest to his exceptional valor and dedication. In his eyes, however, LCDR Belton's family was his greatest achievement.

I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our heartfelt appreciation to LCDR Belton and his family for their sacrifices and service to our country. May his legacy serve as a shining example of honor, courage, and selfless dedication to duty for generations to come.

DR. MARC YACHT

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions of one of my constituents, Dr. Marc Yacht who has volunteered his time and expertise treating patients at the CARES Senior Clinic since 2007 when he retired as the Director of the Pasco County Health Department. He currently provides telehealth services for those who have no other options for care.

Dr. Yacht and his colleagues who volunteer to serve this vulnerable population are making a profound impact on the lives of the patients they serve. Each of these volunteers have servant hearts, and their dedication to our community is impressive. It is said that a society can be judged by how well it treats its most vulnerable citizens. These medical professionals go above and beyond to ensure none of the patients seeking help at CARES Senior Clinic fall through the cracks.

It is clear that Dr. Marc Yacht and his fellow volunteers have made a profoundly positive

impact on our community, and I am grateful for their service.

HONORING NATCHEZ (MS) KAPPA  
ALPHA PSI FRATERNITY

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor some remarkable servants, Natchez Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity.

On March 22, 1964, 12 noble men chartered the Natchez (MS) Alumni Chapter.

The chapter's initial plan was to be named Alcorn Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi, but due to restraints on campus, the chapter was moved to Natchez, Mississippi, which birthed the Natchez (MS) Alumni Chapter.

With hard work and dedication, we salute the honorable charter members: Marino Casem, Eddie Coleman, John Dow, Grant Dungee, Lonnie Eiland, Chris Hester, Charles Humphrey, Willie Jackson, Robert Lewis, Albert Lott, Armand Pinkney, and Riley Williams.

Brothers Armand Pinkney and Riley Williams were also charter members of the Gamma Pi Chapter.

Sixty years later, the Natchez Nupes continue to achieve in every field of human endeavor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Natchez (MS) Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi for their continuing dedication and tenacity to serving their community and desire to be an example for all.

RECOGNIZING MR. RODNEY  
BRUMIT

**HON. DAVID G. VALADAO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Mr. Rodney Brumit for his dedicated service to the Kings County community and to congratulate him on his well-earned retirement as principal of Lemoore High School. Mr. Brumit was born in Hanford to a family of educators. After graduating from Hanford High School where his father was a teacher, Mr. Brumit earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Fresno State University. Mr. Brumit furthered his education at Fresno Pacific University, having completed both the Principals and Superintendents Academies. Mr. Brumit began his 25-year career in education as a history teacher at Coalinga High School. He later became the school's Dean of Students and assistant principal. In 2003, Mr. Brumit became Lemoore High School's assistant principal. After five years as assistant principal, Mr. Brumit was selected as principal, where he would lead a faculty of more than 200 employees and 2,000 students annually. Throughout his tenure, Mr. Brumit was dedicated to the success and well-being of all students at Lemoore High School. He was actively involved in numerous aspects of the school's operation, having served as the Director of the School Attendance Review Boards, a member of the negotiations team,

and as a Special Education administrator. In addition to his achievements as principal, Mr. Brumit was steadfast in his commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable students in the community. Mr. Brumit worked hard to implement gang resistance programs with the King's County Sheriff's Office, bring the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central California program to Lemoore, and create the social and emotional intervention model in coordination with the Kings County Office of Education. Mr. Brumit's dedication to the students at Lemoore High School is a true testament to his character. While he will be missed as principal, I am confident that Mr. Brumit's leadership will have a lasting impact on the Lemoore High School community for years to come. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in thanking Mr. Rodney Brumit for his service to Lemoore High School. I wish him a happy and well-deserved retirement.

CELEBRATING THE GRAND OPENING OF VIRGINIA FOOTHILLS DISTILLERY AND COMPANY

**HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Virginia Foothills Distillery and Company on their grand opening.

Located in Orange County, Virginia, Virginia Foothills Distillery and Company is a blossoming business owned and operated in part by Charles "Chuck" Reinhold. Chuck is a dedicated business owner and partner who brings valuable knowledge to his team through his service to our country.

Previously serving in the U.S. Army and Virginia National Guard, Chuck continues to serve his country as a Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves while operating his business. He has answered the call to serve time and again—from Operation Noble Eagle, to Operation Enduring Freedom, to Operation Enduring Resolve. He was also mobilized in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and provided support to countless communities following various natural disasters. Today, he continues to serve the American people through his position with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. During his free time, he serves as a volunteer firefighter with the Gordonsville Volunteer Fire Company and as a board member for the Orange County Chamber of Commerce.

Virginia Foothills Distillery and Company is a wonderful example of the contributions of our Veterans. I am proud to celebrate the hard work and effort that Veterans like Chuck continue to pour into our communities—making them stronger and more vibrant.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Charles "Chuck" Reinhold and the Virginia Foothills Distillery and Company team. I look forward to celebrating all that they will accomplish in the future as they work to grow and expand their footprint in Orange County, Virginia.

## CELEBRATING THE CITY OF DIAMOND BAR'S 35TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 35th anniversary of the City of Diamond Bar.

Founded in 1989, Diamond Bar is celebrating 35 years of cityhood this April.

Like many Southern California communities, Diamond Bar's recorded history started with a Mexican land grant for ranching, this one covering Brea Canyon and the eastern Walnut Valley.

The Diamond Bar Ranch area eventually developed into a planned residential community. More than 50,000 of my constituents now call Diamond Bar home.

This San Gabriel Valley city set against a mountain backdrop offers a lot to its resident families and visitors, including beautiful parks like Summitridge, a wonderful public library, top-rated school districts, and public safety services.

I am very proud to represent Diamond Bar as part of California's 38th Congressional District.

Happy Birthday to the City of Diamond Bar.

## RECOGNIZING DR. WAYNE TAYLOR

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions of one of my constituents, Dr. Wayne Taylor, recently retired General Practitioner and Wound Care Specialist. He has seen patients at CARES Senior Health Clinic for more than seven years. He is also a brilliant diagnostician who is generous in every way. His caring and patient demeanor helps put patients at ease and ensures they are treated with dignity at all times.

Dr. Taylor and his colleagues who volunteer to serve this vulnerable population are making a profound impact on the lives of the patients they serve. Each of these volunteers have servant hearts, and their dedication to our community is impressive. It is said that a society can be judged by how well it treats its most vulnerable citizens. These medical professionals go above and beyond to ensure none of the patients seeking help at CARES Senior Center fall through the cracks. It is clear that Dr. Wayne Taylor and his fellow volunteers have made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for their service.

## HONORING CONNECTICUT HUMANITIES

**HON. JOE COURTNEY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the longstanding orga-

nization, Connecticut Humanities. Connecticut Humanities is a nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, which strengthens the country's identity through extending grants to humanities-focused institutions that serve the American public. Libraries, historical societies, and museums are just some of the various recipients of these grants. CT Humanities extends residents extensive access to learning materials that divulge the deep roots of Connecticut culture and history.

For the past fifty years, CT Humanities has championed literature, arts, and history across the state. Cultural institutions throughout the state have been both empowered to thrive and extended crucial lifelines by the organization's passionate and helpful staff and its programming that has been carefully curated to meet the needs of Connecticut's humanities community. Throughout the COVID-19 public health crisis, CT Humanities worked resolutely to ensure that cultural organizations were connected to relief efforts, such as funding from the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan Act. In my district, the nonprofit, New London Landmarks, which works to preserve the buildings, neighborhoods and parks that embody the City's history, used this vital financial assistance to maintain access for the community to interact with rich art and history while responsibly navigating the pandemic. Countless similar organizations in every corner of Connecticut were buoyed by CT Humanities throughout this devastating time and are still standing today because of its steadfast support. As a History major during my college days at Tufts University, I particularly appreciate CT Humanities dedicated work to tell our state's incredible history through our schools, symposiums, and social media. Its "This Day in Connecticut History" social media campaign is a service I greatly enjoy.

Looking beyond its capable and rapid response to organizations in the throes of crisis since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, CT Humanities has spent decades tirelessly stewarding the nonprofit cultural sector and inviting Connecticut's communities to take part in its abundant offerings. Between July 2019 and December 2022, CT Humanities hosted over 7.3 million visitors through in-person, virtual, and PreK-12 education visits. Moreover, CT Humanities supports 56,000 jobs within the Connecticut cultural sector. Through its work we are reminded of not only the cultural and historical necessity of a robust humanities network, but also of the immense economic value. Access to culture is a necessary component in creating vibrant, exciting communities to both live and work in, and CT Humanities has worked since its inception to ensure that cultural institutions have a place in the economic conversation. Throughout the years CT Humanities has supported humanities organizations in all 169 Connecticut towns, playing an indispensable role in the preservation and prosperity of our state's history and culture.

For the past fifty years, Connecticut residents have experienced Connecticut Humanities dedication to connecting people and ideas. Citizens not only gain exposure to the experiences of others, but also see themselves and their own histories reflected in these programs. In turn, residents of Connecticut feel empowered and inclined to participate and invest in our communities, preserving this sense of shared identity and con-

necting us to cultural stories from Connecticut and beyond. Access to these cultural resources allows us to walk in others' footsteps, gaining an empathy and sense of history that is crucial to the success of our democracy. Thanks to Connecticut Humanities, diverse cultural education in our state is thriving and continues to break new ground, building upon Connecticut's storied cultural identity to encourage curiosity and understanding for all.

## HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF RICHARD FREEDMAN

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mr. Richard Freedman, a community icon and tremendous writer in the city of Vallejo. Mr. Freedman, who passed away at the age of 67, leaves behind an indelible legacy of service to the City of Vallejo, the Vallejo Times-Herald, and the Solano County community.

Born and raised in Northern California, Mr. Freedman demonstrated his passion for writing from a young age. After earning his bachelor's degree from San Jose State University, Mr. Freedman started working at the Vallejo Times, beginning a lifelong career in writing and reporting.

For 27 years, Mr. Freedman worked for the Vallejo Times-Herald, capturing a cult following with his witty and captivating style of writing. While writing for the Vallejo Times-Herald he served as a reporter, wrote his own weekly column, and ultimately became the Herald's longtime community editor. In addition, Mr. Freedman oversaw the Vallejo Times-Herald's Community Christmas Card every year, helping raise nearly \$500,000 to help feed members of our community.

Mr. Freedman's critical work as a journalist earned him wide-spread recognition and cemented his position as a legend in the California journalism community. In 2009, he was awarded Journalist of the Year by the West Coast Blues Hall of Fame, and in 2013 he was awarded the Humanitarian of the Year by Theta Pi Chapter, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity in Vallejo. His critical contributions made him a beacon of light within his community and brought joy and laughter to those around him.

Mr. Freedman will be remembered for his decades of service to the City of Vallejo and for the impact his life and writing had on our community. His enduring spirit will live on in his family and the community he dedicated his life to serving. I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to Mr. Freedman's loved ones. I know they and the people of California will join me in celebrating his life and legacy.

## RECOGNIZING THE VON VOIGTLANDER WOMEN'S HOSPITAL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

**HON. DEBBIE DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital

at the University of Michigan Medical Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan, for serving the community for over 70 years. Touching countless lives over their storied history, their dedication and impact on the greater Michigan community is worthy of commendation.

Established as the University of Michigan Women's Hospital in 1950, the University of Michigan sought to provide world-class maternity and obstetrics services while opening a facility to teach nurses and medical students and support research dedicated to transforming care for all women. With their program philosophy based on multispecialty team care, the hospital provides well-rounded care for women, including midwifery, a family planning clinic, fetal diagnosis and therapy, and minimally invasive surgery. The hospital also conducts advanced research and treatment on comprehensive infertility services, BRCA gene mutations, and cervical, ovarian, and other women's cancers.

With nearly 90 expert physicians and over 133,000 patient visits per year, Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital delivers over 5,400 children and performs nearly 4,000 procedures each year. The hospital provides comprehensive and specialized treatment for women's health. Women face specific health challenges and the Von Voigtlander Hospital ensure that they have the best healthcare possible for their needs. One specific area of work is on endometriosis, a condition that impacts women only and is a chronic condition that can significantly reduce a woman's quality of life. The Hospital's commitment to excellence has helped Michigan Medicine achieve exceptional rankings among national medical programs each year and helped Michigan Medicine achieve the number one overall rank for hospitals in Michigan. Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital has been recognized as the No. 3 gynecology program in the Nation, the No. 1 gynecology department in the State of Michigan, and was awarded Magnet Status Designation in 2017. Only 6 percent of U.S. hospitals received the Magnet status Designation, which required organizations to meet rigorous standards for patient care, nursing excellence, and innovations in professional nursing practice. The hospital has also been recognized as a National Center of Excellence in Women's Health.

Providing world class medical care requires world class facilities. In 2011, the University of Michigan Women's Hospital became the Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital following a \$15 million gift from the Ted and Jane Von Voigtlander Foundation. The program moved into a new state-of-the-art 12-story facility on the University of Michigan Medical Campus that is now home to both Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital and C.S. Mott Children's Hospital. The new facility is the length of two football fields, and at 1.1 million square feet, it has all the resources needed for the hospital to continue providing the best care for women possible.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital at the University of Michigan. For more than 70 years, the hospital has demonstrated all exceptional dedication to furthering the study and treatments for women's health while providing incredible care for women across the State of Michigan. We thank the physicians, nurses, and staff of Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital for their com-

mitment and service to their community. We need more hospitals dedicated to women's health research and treatment, and I am excited to see all that is accomplished at Michigan Medicine over the next 70 years.

#### RECOGNIZING LEE JOHNSON

#### HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions of one of my constituents, Lee Johnson, who serves as a volunteer Board Member for the local non-profit, Brooksville Main Street. These outstanding volunteers put in hundred of hours while running their businesses and organizations. They have all come together for a common cause—to serve the community by bringing much-loved events to downtown Brooksville. Each of these board members have servant hearts, and their dedication and commitment to our community is impressive. Part of what makes our country so great is the willingness of ordinary Americans to go above and beyond to selflessly give back to others. Volunteerism is one of the cornerstones of our society and part of the fabric that unites us.

It is clear that Lee Johnson and fellow board members have made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for their service.

#### COMMEMORATING THE PASSING OF SONIA IRIS COLLAZO

#### HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today commemorate the passing of Sonia Iris Collazo, a beloved matriarch, community advocate, and proud daughter of Puerto Rico. Sonia I. Collazo was born on February 23, 1948 in Orocovis, Puerto Rico to Alfredo Gonzalez and Adela Melendez de Gonzalez. She passed away in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on March 26, 2024.

Sonia's journey is one of strength and perseverance. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, she learned the value of community and the power of education from an early age. After receiving her formal education in Orocovis, she attended the Universidad Interamericana de Puelto Rico—Bananquitas before moving to Philadelphia. Upon arriving in Philadelphia, she continued her education at Temple University and worked as a kindergarten teacher at Potter-Thomas School.

She also quickly became involved in her community, becoming one of the first employees at Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha (APM), a Latino-based health, human services, community, and economic development non-profit organization serving the Philadelphia area. Sonia went on to have a long and respected career in the City of Philadelphia's Department of Human Relations, retiring after more than 26 years of service. She was a proud member of AFSCME District Council 47.

Her warmth and generosity have touched countless lives, bringing hope and encourage-

ment to those in need. Whether through volunteering, advocacy work, or simply lending a listening ear, Sonia's impact was felt far and wide. Sonia's advocacy extended beyond her immediate circle, as she was one of the lead organizers of the 'Walk for Peace,' an initiative that began in 1996 to address violence among young people. In retirement, Sonia volunteered much of her time at Congreso de Latinos Unidos retirees' program.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of her tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to serving others, we honor Sonia as a loving mother, community organizer, and champion of Puerto Rico. Her legacy inspires us all to strive for a more just, compassionate, and inclusive society.

#### COMMEMORATING THE WARSAW MASONIC LODGE'S 175TH ANNIVERSARY

#### HON. RUDY YAKYM III

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate Warsaw Masonic Lodge No. 73 F.&A.M in Warsaw, Indiana, as they prepare to celebrate their 175th anniversary on May 30, 2024.

Since its founding in 1849, the Warsaw Masonic Lodge has played an integral role in the Kosciusko County community. As a fraternal organization, the Warsaw Masonic Lodge is dedicated to the kind of values that all of us should espouse: respect for history, duty to country, a desire to serve others, and a commitment to forge a better future.

As the oldest institution still in existence in Warsaw, Indiana, the Warsaw Masonic Lodge has stood the test of time and made significant and long-lasting contributions to the social and cultural life of Warsaw and all of Kosciusko County.

This is above all a testament to quality of its members and the men who have walked through the Lodge's doors over the years. The Warsaw Masonic Lodge and organizations like it do much to contribute to the health of our communities in northern Indiana, and for that I am extremely grateful.

I join many other Hoosiers in wishing the Warsaw Masonic Lodge a very happy 175th anniversary and many more successful and active years ahead.

#### RECOGNIZING JENNIFER REY

#### HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions of one of my constituents, Jennifer Rey, who serves as a volunteer Board Member for the local non-profit, Brooksville Main Street. These outstanding volunteers put in hundreds of hours while running their businesses and organizations. They have all come together for a common cause- to serve the community by bringing much-loved events to downtown Brooksville. Each of these board members



have servant hearts, and their dedication and commitment to our community is impressive. Part of what makes our country so great is the willingness of ordinary Americans to go above and beyond to selflessly give back to others. Volunteerism is one of the cornerstones of our society and part of the fabric that unites us.

It is clear that Jennifer Rey and fellow board members have made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for their service.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF  
DETECTIVE KELSEY WADE

**HON. RALPH NORMAN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exemplary actions of Detective Kelsey Wade of the Sumter Police Department, whose quick thinking and bravery undoubtedly saved a life on the night of February 9, 2024.

On that fateful evening, officers were dispatched to respond to a shooting incident on Thomas Drive. Among them was Detective Kelsey Wade, who arrived at the scene promptly and without hesitation.

Upon her arrival, she encountered a male victim with a serious gunshot wound to his neck. Undeterred by the severity of the situation, Detective Wade immediately sprang into action, identifying the severed artery and pinching it shut while providing first aid to the victim.

Detective Wade's decisive actions undoubtedly played a pivotal role in stabilizing the victim's condition and ensuring that he received the necessary medical attention in a timely manner. Her selfless dedication to duty and unwavering commitment to protecting and serving her community exemplify the highest ideals of law enforcement.

In recognition of her heroic efforts and exemplary service, I commend Detective Kelsey Wade for her bravery and professionalism. Her actions on the night of February 9th are a testament to her exceptional character and the values she upholds as a member of the Sumter Police Department's Investigations Division.

Please join me in expressing our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to Detective Kelsey Wade for her selfless service and dedication to the safety and well-being of our community.

CONGRESSIONAL EDUCATION  
AWARDS

**HON. VERN BUCHANAN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of outstanding public school employees in Florida's 16th Congressional District.

School employees work tirelessly because they understand that their efforts are not just about fulfilling a job description, but about shaping the future.

They deserve recognition because they are the architects of knowledge, the mentors of

tomorrow's leaders, and the unsung heroes who work behind the scenes to ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive.

Ten years ago, I established the Congressional Teacher Awards program with the aim of providing special acknowledgment to educators within Florida's 16th Congressional District for their outstanding achievements. This year, we expanded the event's scope to encompass all school employees, recognizing their invaluable contribution in both teaching and inspiring students.

The following public school employees from Manatee and Hillsborough counties were nominated and selected to receive Florida's 16th District's 2024 Congressional Education Award for their accomplishments:

Manatee County: Michelle Ayling, State College of Florida Collegiate School; Jensina Barnes, Palm View K-8; Pauline Barnes, Manatee High School; W. Shane Baxley, Manatee Technical College; Amy Bradl, Willis Elementary School; Patrice Cairo, Gene Witt Elementary School; William Cirone, Manatee Technical College; Joadie Durfee, Harvey Elementary School; Rennie Finck, Lakewood Ranch High School; Katie Fradley, Willis Elementary School; Jennifer Harper, Williams Elementary School; Jen Johnson, Sea Breeze Elementary School; Kami Lake, various Manatee County schools; Debra McCarthy, Lakewood Ranch High School; Chelsea McCay, Daughtrey Elementary School; Stefanie Miniham, Braden River High School; Patricia Pearson, Braden River Middle School; Katherine Price, Willis Elementary School; Jodi Samson, McNeal Elementary School; Laura Schuyler, Braden River Middle School; Jessica Spence, McNeal Elementary School.

Hillsborough County: Kathy Dodd, Newsome High School; Donna Hart, Newsome High School; Melissa Hart, Winthrop Charter School; Aliya Norman, Reddick Elementary School; Kimberly Opperman, Reddick Elementary School.

On behalf of the people of Florida's 16th District, I congratulate each of these outstanding educators and offer my sincere appreciation for their service and dedication.

CELEBRATING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF BLOOMINGDALE BAPTIST CHURCH

**HON. DIANA HARSHBARGER**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 80th anniversary of the Bloomingdale Baptist Church, who serves as a beacon of faith and hope to the residents of East Tennessee, as the oldest Baptist church in the region. Since its founding, the church has been a cornerstone of spiritual guidance and unwavering support to the Bloomingdale community.

On April 2, 1944, a council of eight preachers and thirteen deacons answered the call for faith services and formed the Bloomingdale Baptist Church, the first Baptist church in the area. Since then, thirteen charter members, in an assembly of letters, statements, and baptisms, built community service, faith, and charity as the strong foundations to rest the church. To this very day, these spiritual values

live loudly within the hearts of Bloomingdale Baptist Church congregants and its leadership.

Throughout Bloomingdale Baptist's history, a tradition of devoted leadership has remained a perennial source of inspiration and renewal. The first elected pastor, James Taft Richards, led worship services with a passion and faith that invigorated church members until 1950. His successor, Pastor Joseph William Byrd, renowned as a symbol of resolve, served as the longest-tenured Southern Baptist pastor to lead a single church. Following Pastor Byrd's tenure, Pastor Phillip R. Whittemore helmed the church, upholding its enduring legacy of faith and community service until his retirement in 2023. Now, as the church looks forward, Pastor Wade Childress provides stability and an uplifting vision for the future as Bloomingdale Baptist Church's interim pastor.

Bloomingdale Baptist Church has not only served as a place of worship, but a welcoming center for community life. It has witnessed countless baptisms, marriages, and gatherings, each event enriching the lives of its congregation and the Bloomingdale community at large. As Bloomingdale Baptist Church celebrates this remarkable milestone, we recognize its steadfast and profound impact for generations of church members, instilling faith, love, and service to the community it serves and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Bloomingdale Baptist Church on its 80th anniversary. I wish Pastor Childress and the entire congregation another 80 wonderful years of continued faith and service in the Bloomingdale community.

HONORING THE 2024 GOOD SCOUT  
AWARD RECIPIENT JEFF STRACK

**HON. FRANK J. MRVAN**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I take this time to recognize the 2024 Good Scout Award recipient, presented annually by the LaSalle Council Boy Scouts of America. To commemorate this special occasion, the organization is hosting a celebratory event on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at the Porter County Expo Center and Fairgrounds in Valparaiso, Indiana.

Each year, the LaSalle Council Boy Scouts of America presents the Good Scout Award to individuals whose efforts have had significant positive impacts on their communities in Northwest Indiana and across the state. This year, the LaSalle Council Boy Scouts of America will be honoring Jeff Strack, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Indiana Grocery Group/Strack & Van Til.

Jeff's impressive career with Strack & Van Til spans over thirty years. He has held numerous positions with the organization including Vice President of Operations and Chief Marketing/Strategy Officer, among others. Currently, Jeff is the company's President and CEO, a position he has held since 2016. During that time, Mr. Strack has created a culture of success by developing an executive team that is focused on customer satisfaction, employee appreciation, exceptional service, quality products, and community involvement. Under his outstanding leadership, Strack &

Van Til has grown to include more than twenty locations, and the organization continues to evolve to meet the needs of the communities it serves.

Jeff Strack generously serves his community by giving his time and efforts to numerous charitable endeavors. He also serves on several local, national, and advisory boards. In addition, Strack & Van Til has a long history of supporting organizations that focus on hunger relief, first responders, military, educational foundations, local sports teams, and more. For his outstanding commitment to so many earnest causes, Jeff Strack is to be commended.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring the LaSalle Council Boy Scouts of America and its 2024 Good Scout Award recipient, Jeff Strack. For his lifetime of leadership and tireless dedication to the community of Northwest Indiana and beyond, Jeff Strack is worthy of the highest praise.

RECOGNIZING TECHNION-ISRAEL  
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

**HON. RITCHIE TORRES**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. TORRES of New York. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the work of the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology as it is celebrating its centennial. As Israel's first university, the Technion has educated generations of engineers, architects, and scientists who have helped lay the Nation's infrastructure and establish its crucial high-tech industries. At every juncture of the country's development, the Technion has been there, protecting the State of Israel.

The Technion is a global leader in science, engineering, research, and technology education. Its unique culture of entrepreneurship empowers students to be visionary change-makers and global innovators. The Technion is a global university with a presence in New York and China, having partnerships with institutions like the University of Michigan, Cornell University, and MIT. By having the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute at Cornell Tech on New York City's Roosevelt Island, they can bring academia and industry together, featuring the Runway Startup Postdoc Program.

In the past 100 years the Technion has become the leading university in Israel and Europe and one of the top 100 universities in the world. In 2020, the Technion was ranked No. 12 in the world for producing entrepreneurs, having generated 602 founders who have set up 509 companies and have raised \$12.4 billion. Technion graduates comprise the majority of Israel-educated scientists and engineers, consulting more than 50 percent of the country's founders and managers of high-tech industries. Seven out of ten Israel-educated engineers are Technion graduates and 85 percent of the Israel technological workforce are companies led by Technion graduates. Technion alumni have founded a total of 1,075 companies, valued at more than \$1 billion and have attracted \$2.5 billion in venture capital per year.

I also want to highlight the American Technion Society (ATS). Over the past 85

years, the ATS has raised a transformative amount of funding for Technion students, faculty, research, and infrastructure. This not only empowers Israel's economic growth and security, but better the lives of people around the world.

I give a big congratulations to the Technion and all of its accomplishments in the past 100 years. I am excited to see how it will continue to grow in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING HIS HOLINESS DR.  
VASANTH VIJAYJI MAHARAJ  
FOR HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**HON. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize His Holiness Dr. Vasanth Vijayji Maharaj for his lifetime dedication to promoting peace, spirituality, and brotherhood.

At a young age, His Holiness committed himself to the teachings of non-violence, meditation, and religious unity. Accordingly, he has organized numerous events to educate people on moral integrity, sustainable environmental practices, and healthy lifestyle choices to improve societal well-being.

His Holiness has also worked to combat poverty and homelessness throughout India by organizing public gatherings and events. Collectively, his events have helped to distribute clothing items and food to more than 15,000 individuals in need.

Notably, His Holiness's movement for non-violence has received international recognition and engagement. In 2005, he organized the Historic Peace March in India, bringing together practitioners of multiple religions to promote unity. He also organized Vasanth Vizag, in which over 750,000 people gathered to advocate for peaceful conflict resolution. In 2008, he held the World Peace Festival where attendees participated in a candle lighting ceremony to signify harmony between countries around the world. His Holiness's commendable efforts to unify diverse peoples through shared values transcend national boundaries.

At all of these events, His Holiness showcased his unique approach to cultivating mutual respect and understanding between people by highlighting what they have in common. His vision is for teachers, parents, children, and policymakers to work together to combat social injustices. As a result of his teachings and guidance, his millions of followers have established over 100 peace centers and charitable trusts across the world.

His Holiness's efforts to promote interstate and interfaith cooperation have been recognized by organizations worldwide. In 2009, he was appointed as Diplomatic Counsellor of India by the International Parliament for Safety and Peace and given the prestigious title of Ambassador of Peace by the Universal Peace Federation. His Holiness was also nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize to recognize the impact he has had throughout the world.

His Holiness has empowered and uplifted countless individuals physically and spiritually, and it is for that impact, Mr. Speaker, that I wish to extend my gratitude and appreciation to His Holiness Dr. Vasanth Vijayji Maharaj.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ENSURING  
FULL PARTICIPATION IN THE  
CENSUS ACT OF 2024

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Ensuring Full Participation in the Census Act of 2024, which would prohibit the U.S. Census Bureau (Bureau) from including questions on the decennial census about citizenship, nationality or immigration status.

Prior to the 2020 census, the Department of Justice wrote to the Bureau requesting that it "reinstate on the 2020 [c]ensus questionnaire a question regarding citizenship." From 1970 to 2000, this question was sent to only approximately 16 percent of the population in the decennial census through the so-called "long-form." However, the long-form system was dropped from the census and replaced with the current American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is sent to approximately three million people annually on a rotational basis, and allows the Bureau to get the necessary information on citizenship. Asking questions about citizenship status to every person in the decennial census has not been done in almost 70 years because it would discourage people, largely minorities, who are already undercounted in the census, from participating in the census. The ACS was created to make the decennial census simpler for people to complete, which facilitates higher participation rates and preserves privacy.

Fortunately, after a protracted legal and political process, the citizenship question was not included on the 2020 census. However, this legislation is necessary to ensure it cannot be asked on a future decennial census. The representative sampling provided by the ACS is more than sufficient to determine citizenship statistics in the U.S. We must ensure that all individuals are counted in the decennial census, thereby providing accurate allocation of federal funds and representation in Congress, and not reduce participation by asking a question that is already asked elsewhere.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH WEDDING  
ANNIVERSARY OF ROBERT AND  
KATIE PYLE

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 60th wedding anniversary of Robert and Katie Pyle.

Robert was born in 1936 and Katie in 1940, both in Hobson City, Alabama. The Pyles attended school in Calhoun County. Robert graduated in 1956 and Katie was valedictorian of her class in 1958.

After graduation, Robert was drafted in the U.S. Army and enrolled at Tuskegee Institute School of Nursing. After a few years of separation, Robert was stationed in Korea. Katie wrote him letters often to update him on her life in Hobson City. When Robert came home from Korea, he walked Katie to the bowling

lanes because neither had a vehicle. The following day, Robert bought himself an XL500 red Ford.

The Pyles married on April 10, 1964, and Robert was deployed to Vietnam in 1965. His service to the United States included assignments at Ft. McClellan, North Carolina, NATO-Naples, Italy, Georgia, and Korea. He retired from the Army in 1976.

The Pyles have always put God at the center of their marriage and are active members at The New Hope Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of Pastor Judge Stringer, III.

The Pyles have also been active in their community. Robert served as a council member and as mayor of Hobson City while Katie served on various boards.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the Pyles and thanking them for their service to their area and wishing them a happy 60th wedding anniversary.

#### RECOGNIZING KAREN EPTING

#### HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions made in our community by one of my constituents, Karen Epting. Ms. Epting's leadership at the YMCA of the Suncoast—James P. Gill's Family Branch goes beyond mere titles; it's rooted in her genuine passion for making a difference in the Pasco community. As Chair of the YMCA Branch Advisory Council for many years, she provided strategic guidance and rolled up her sleeves to actively participate in the branch's many initiatives and events. Her role as Campaign Chair for the YMCA's fundraising efforts in Pasco County underscores her ability to rally support and resources for vital programs and services.

Her dedication ensures that the YMCA can continue its mission of serving the community effectively. Karen's continued involvement in the YMCA's partnership with Feeding Tampa Bay reflects her compassionate response to urgent community needs. Karen helps oversee the distribution of food to over 130 families every two weeks. In this capacity she not only addresses immediate hunger but also fosters a sense of belonging and support within the community.

Coordinating a team of 30 volunteers is no small feat, yet Karen does so gracefully and efficiently. She assists in recruiting and training volunteers and fosters a sense of camaraderie and purpose among them. Her hands-on approach during food pick-ups, where she personally welcomes each family and assists with intake procedures, demonstrates her commitment to serving others with dignity and respect. Karen's advocacy for youth literacy is also a testament to her belief in the power of education to transform lives. By leading volunteer efforts for youth reading programs, she promotes literacy and instills a love for learning in young minds, empowering them to reach their full potential. During the holidays, Karen's leadership shines brightly as she volunteers many hours to the YMCA's Seasons of Giving and Giving Tree programs, encouraging community members to spread joy and

generosity by purchasing gifts for children in need. Her ability to inspire others to give back underscores her exceptional leadership and ability to mobilize resources for the greater good. Despite her preference for working behind the scenes, Karen's impact reverberates throughout the YMCA and the community at large. Her selfless dedication and unwavering passion serve as a beacon of hope and inspiration, inspiring others to follow in her footsteps and make a positive difference in the world.

It is clear that Ms. Epting has made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for her service.

#### HONORING JAYLEN WATSON

#### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and acknowledge the remarkable achievements of student Jaylen Watson.

Jaylen Watson, born in Clarksdale, Mississippi, is the youngest of two children to his parents, Chandra and Ronald Watson, Sr. His older brother is Ronald Watson, Jr. Currently, a student at Madison S. Palmer High School in Marks, Mississippi, Jaylen is excelling in his academic studies and maintaining an impressive 4.0 GPA. As a proud member of the class of 2024, Jaylen looks forward to graduating soon.

Throughout his high school years, Jaylen has actively participated in various community and educational activities. Some of his involvements include being a member of the Beta Club, FCCLA, The Global Teaching Project, and Jobs for Mississippi Graduates, among others. Within these organizations, Jaylen has taken up leadership positions, such as serving as a Chick-fil-A Leadership Ambassador and currently holding the role of Vice-President in his school's Beta Club. Additionally, he takes on responsibility of Class President for his senior class and Vice-President for Jobs for Mississippi Graduates.

While Jaylen has achieved many accomplishments and held numerous leadership roles, his faith in God remains his utmost priority. He is an active member of the New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church in Clarksdale, Mississippi, where he finds solace and support from his church family.

Apart from his academic and extracurricular pursuits, Jaylen has a strong passion for caring for the elderly in his community. To support this cause, he organized a community service project to raise funds for blankets and sock footies during the cold winter months. Jaylen successfully purchased these items for all the residents of Quitman County Health and Rehab, bringing joy and comfort to the vital citizens in need. Furthermore, he has also extended his support to preschoolers by sponsoring a class during Christmas time, motivating and uplifting their young minds with toys and treats. Jaylen finds great satisfaction in nurturing the future leaders of his small town.

With a deep commitment to giving back and caring for his community, Jaylen has decided to pursue nursing in his undergraduate studies

in college. His ultimate goal is to continue his education in graduate school, aiming for a doctorate degree to make a significant impact on his community. Jaylen is driven and excited to be the best version of himself, striving to make his family, friends, and community proud. He firmly believes that nothing is impossible with faith and lives by the inspiring words of Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging and celebrating the outstanding achievements of Jaylen Watson.

#### CONGRATULATING JAKE MERKLINGER AND RASHAWN TRUELL

#### HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate two Georgia quarterbacks—Calvary Day School's Jake Merklinger, and New Hampstead High School's RaShawn Truell, for their tied win of the Finocchio Award.

The Michael Finocchio Memorial Outstanding Football Player Award, now in its 43rd year, crowns the standout high school player in Savannah and Chatham County. Remarkably, the recent award ceremony marked only the second occasion in its history where two players tied after voting concluded.

Merklinger, the senior quarterback who is committed to Tennessee, also took home the Ashley Dearing Award as a junior, which is awarded to the most versatile male high school athlete.

Truell says "this is a big honor for [him], especially as a junior, to win this award." He followed that by stating, "It shows that all the hard work that I have put in has paid off. But everything I work for is to help our team—our goal is to win a state championship."

Congratulations again to both Jake and RaShawn.

#### HONORING THE CRITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MR. ANGELO K. TSAKOPOULOS

#### HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Angelo K. Tsakopoulos upon receiving the American Hellenic Institution Hellenic Heritage Lifetime Achievement Award. Mr. Tsakopoulos is the founder, CEO, and co-chairman of AKT Development and has devoted his career to improving California for all.

Born in Arcadia, Greece, Mr. Tsakopoulos first came to the United States at the age of 15. He worked diligently to send money home to his family in Greece and attended the University of Illinois and Sacramento State University, where he cultivated his passion for learning. In 1964, he founded AKT Development, beginning what would become a lifetime of leadership in California's residential and commercial development.

Through his work with AKT Development, Mr. Tsakopoulos built entire communities, universities, and homes, helping California and its residents thrive. Since its founding, AKT Development has built over 60,000 homes and today, it manages nearly 20,000 acres of farmland in Northern and Central California. Mr. Tsakopoulos' critical work is characterized by his commitment to balancing the need for natural spaces with real estate development. His philosophy is simple: plant as many trees as possible and preserve the existing ones whenever possible.

Mr. Tsakopoulos' passion for environmental stewardship led him to establish the Sacramento Tree Foundation, which is dedicated to protecting and growing the urban forest within Sacramento. His dedication to planting and preserving trees as both a developer and lifelong advocate will continue to benefit California for generations.

Mr. Tsakopoulos' leadership, generosity, and compassionate spirit have impacted the lives of countless members of his community and beyond. I join the American Hellenic Institution in honoring the critical contributions of Mr. Tsakopoulos.

#### RECOGNIZING THE SALINE FIDDLERS' 30TH ANNIVERSARY

#### HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Saline Fiddlers Philharmonic, a premier youth fiddling show band from Saline, Michigan, on their 30th anniversary. Comprised of students from Saline High School the fiddlers present an energetic and polished show that features a diverse range of music from American folk, fiddle, bluegrass, jazz, western swing, and Celtic traditions. Their 30 years of unforgettable performances are remarkable, and their commitment and skill are worthy of commendation.

The Fiddlers began in 1994 with the simple idea of introducing an alternative style of musical education to public school students to maintain and expand their interest in musical performance. Since 1994, these remarkable students have set the standard for extracurricular music programs in the United States and have become a model for instruction and motivation that other schools across the nation have added to their own programs.

With over 1,500 performances in the majority of the states in our nation, the Fiddlers have a storied history that includes three performances at the White House, two performances on the Millennium Stage at the Kennedy Center, and a performance at the State of Michigan's Presidential Inaugural Ball. The Fiddlers have also traveled to Canada and Europe for performances and have made multiple trips to Saline's sister cities of Brecon, Wales and Lindenberg, Germany. Each year, the group performs 50–60 times, with around a third of their annual schedule being donated to community service events. I still fondly remember their performance at the Saline Celtic Festival this past summer.

Working alongside the artistic team, the Saline Fiddlers help plan each aspect of their shows by crafting arrangements and making

diverse organizational decisions that helps teach the students collaborative ownership while giving students the opportunity to explore their creativity and showcase their enthusiasm throughout the show making process. These accomplished members of the Fiddlers are selected through competitive auditions that assess their musical talent and personal maturity. They balance academics, school organizations, jobs, and other extracurricular activities. Teaching students not just about music but about maintaining a balanced schedule and workload is a true testament to how the Saline Fiddlers Philharmonic has helped 30 years of students prepare for their futures through music.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the Saline Fiddlers Philharmonic on their 30th anniversary. Their commitment to music and community is an incredible accomplishment and has helped preserve music and tradition for future generations. I cannot wait to see all they accomplish in the years to come.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF SERVICE OF DR. WILLIAM "BILL" GREER

#### HON. DIANA HARSHBARGER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. William "Bill" Greer, a distinguished leader, educator, and advocate for higher education who has announced his retirement as the 15th President of Milligan University. Dr. Greer's exemplary tenure, spanning more than 13 years, is marked by significant transformation, growth, and achievement for Milligan University.

A proud alumnus, Dr. Greer graduated from Milligan in 1985 and returned to his alma mater in 1994 as a Professor of Economics and Business. With a wealth of experience after a decade in the private sector, Dr. Greer led the institution's business initiative as the founding director of Milligan's MBA program. His leadership as Vice President for Institutional Advancement was instrumental to the success of the "Forward Ever" campaign, raising \$28 million for the university in its first phase of implementation.

Since assuming the role of president in 2011, Dr. Greer has been a visionary, guiding Milligan University to unprecedented levels of achievement. Under his leadership, the university has received recognition as one of the Best Regional Universities and Best Values in the South. In 2020, Dr. Greer helmed the impressive modernization and expansion of 25 additional academic programs, elevating Milligan's status from a college to a university.

Dr. Greer's presidency is highlighted by a series of significant accomplishments, including record enrollment, giving, and endowment growth. He presided over the integration of Emmanuel Christian Seminary, the establishment of Milligan Village, and the growth of multiple academic and athletic facilities. His efforts have significantly increased the university's footprint to 355 acres and brought numerous national recognitions to Milligan.

Additionally, Dr. Greer's focus on Milligan's mission as a premier, Christian liberal arts institution has resulted in the education and

support of thousands of students, overseeing nearly 4,000 graduates under his tenure. Furthermore, his leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic exemplified compassion and resilience, guiding the university through unprecedented challenges.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Bill Greer for his outstanding service to Milligan and our region. His retirement marks the end of an era of exceptional service and dynamic leadership. I am certain his legacy will continue to inspire current and future generations of Buffs. I wish him and his family all the best in his retirement and his continued service as Chancellor of Milligan University.

#### RECOGNIZING DANIEL PRITZ

#### HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the unique contributions of one of my constituents, Daniel Pritz, who serves as a volunteer Board Member for the local non-profit, Brooksville Main Street. These outstanding volunteers put in hundreds of hours while running their businesses and organizations.

They have all come together for a common cause—to serve the community by bringing much-loved events to downtown Brooksville. Each of these board members have servant hearts, and their dedication and commitment to our community is impressive. Part of what makes our country so great is the willingness of ordinary Americans to go above and beyond to selflessly give back to others.

Volunteerism is one of the cornerstones of our society and part of the fabric that unites us.

It is clear that Daniel Pritz and fellow board members have made a profoundly positive impact on our community, and I am grateful for their service.

#### HONORING DELTA MISSIONS

#### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable organization, Delta Missions.

Delta Missions Ministry is a nonprofit Christian outreach organization dedicated to advancing the gospel of Jesus Christ, offering discipleship training to local residents, and empowering them to actively engage in their local churches. Our mission is to impact lives and nurture spiritual transformation through weekly Bible studies, lay training, recreational activities, and mentoring programs tailored for youth, adults, and senior citizens.

Under the guidance of Reverend Herron Wilson, Delta Missions was born out of a desire to replicate the impactful work experienced during his time with The Sonflowers, a mission focused on Vacation Bible School (VBS) camps in the town of Sunflower. Upon returning to the Southgate Community in

Indianola, Rev. Wilson identified an opportunity to utilize the vacant Bethune Center at the heart of the community to launch a VBS camp. The Executive Director of South Delta Housing generously granted access to the center without charge.

The inaugural VBS camp took place in the summer of 1995, drawing over 100 enthusiastic kids. The overwhelming positive response led to the transformation of the summer camp into a weekly gathering, providing not only spiritual education but also recreational activities, arts and crafts, and occasional outings for children and their families.

This grassroots initiative laid the foundation for Delta Missions, which is proud to celebrate its 30th year of service to the Indianola community this summer.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Delta Missions for their passion and dedication to serving their community.

CELEBRATING “ELIZABETH’S”  
AND “THE OLDE PINK HOUSE”

**HON. EARL L. “BUDDY” CARTER**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate two hardworking Georgia establishments that were named among the Nation’s top 100 restaurants.

Recently, the restaurant review website ‘Open Table’ released its Top 100 Restaurants in America for 2023 list. Both ‘Elizabeth’s’ and ‘The Olde Pink House’ made it on the list.

The review states that ‘Elizabeth’s’ has “Southern hospitality, fine coastal cuisine, and well-chosen wines in a comfortable, elegant 1900 mansion have made Elizabeth on 37th a favorite destination in Savannah since 1981.”

As far as the ‘Olde Pink House’ goes, the review states it is “Savannah’s only 18th-century mansion [and] is famous for memorable dining experiences featuring seafood caught daily in local waters, prime aged beef, and traditional southern fare.”

Congratulations to these establishments, and I wish them both continued success.

HONORING THE CRITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MS. CHLOE STEMLER

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in deep appreciation of Ms. Chloe Stemler for her service to the American people as a member of my staff.

Ms. Stemler joined my office in January of 2023 as an intern, having graduated from George Washington University. In June of 2023, she started her role of Press Assistant and, from day one, helped revitalize and significantly increase our online engagement. Many of my highest-performing social media posts occurred during her tenure, for which I am grateful. She raised the bar for my office’s digital media and set an example I will hold my staff to for years to come.

During her tenure on my staff, Ms. Stemler demonstrated an unfaltering work ethic and a high level of creativity. Whether it was taking videos or writing captions, she approached every task with enthusiasm and humor. She cared deeply for her colleagues and was always willing to lend a helping hand. These same qualities will serve her well in her future endeavors.

Ms. Stemler will be starting a new role as a Communications Associate at the Pew Charitable Trusts. Her contributions have left an indelible mark on my team, and I am confident that she will excel in her new position.

While we will miss her deeply, we all look forward to Ms. Stemler’s bright future. She will always remain a deeply valued member of Team Garamendi.

RECOGNIZING DR. COURTNEY  
STACEY LIM FOR HER DECADE  
OF EXEMPLARY CARE AND  
SERVICE

**HON. DEBBIE DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Courtney S. Lim, on the occasion of her 10 years of practicing medicine. Her continued dedication and service to her patients in Ann Arbor, Michigan is worthy of commendation.

Dr. Courtney Lim attended the University of Michigan Medical School in 2008, then went on to complete her residency at the McGaw Medical Center at Northwestern University in 2012, earning a board certification for obstetrics and gynecology. Afterwards, she returned to Ann Arbor, where she continued her education through a fellowship, achieving a Focused Practice designation in Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery in 2014 from the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Now practicing as Service Chief of Gynecology at the University of Michigan’s Von Voigtlander Women’s Hospital in Ann Arbor, Dr. Lim is serving patients with extreme care and compassion.

Dr. Lim is committed to caring for those afflicted with complex gynecologic disorders. She is open about her approach to health care and continuously strives to determine what the best course of action is for each individual. Dr. Lim truly listens to her patients and recommends a treatment plan that is best aligned with that patient’s values and wishes. Dr. Lim offers both medical and surgical treatment options and strives to be as minimally invasive as possible when it comes to surgery. In her work, Dr. Lim is conscientious, knowledgeable, and addresses even the smallest of concerns from her patients. She exemplifies the values of what it means to be an excellent caretaker and serves as a leader in her field of work.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Courtney S. Lim for her continued service to her patients. Dr. Lim conducts herself in a way that our future doctors should aspire to: thoughtfully listening to each and every patient, and serving as a steady, compassionate force for patients to find comfort with. I have no doubt she will continue to exhibit her dedication and genuine care in treatment for many years to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF  
NATHANIEL “RAY” TUCK, JR.

**HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Nathaniel “Ray” Tuck, Jr., who passed away at the age of 52 on February 11, 2024, after battling cancer for the past two and a half years.

Ray was born in Roanoke, Virginia, on April 30, 1971, to Nathaniel Ray and Barbara Z. Tuck. He later graduated from Radford University in 1994 and earned his Doctor of Chiropractic from the National University of Health Sciences in 1997. After graduating, he joined his father’s chiropractic clinic in Southwest Virginia where they practiced together for many years. His son, Nathaniel R. Tuck, III is currently in chiropractic school, hoping to continue the family legacy.

During Ray’s incredible career, he served as the President of the Virginia Chiropractic Association, Chairman of the Board, and later President of the American Chiropractic Association, and was also appointed to be the chiropractor on the Virginia Board of Medicine.

Ray is survived by his wife, Bonnie, of 29 years, his daughter Abi Dolgos (husband Dakota Dolgos and grandson Gatlin Dolgos), his son Nathaniel (girlfriend Abby E. Markham), his mother Barbara, his sister Amelia Martin (husband Buddy Martin), and his brother Ben M. Tuck (wife Priyam Chipper). I wish them peace and strength during this difficult time.

I was lucky to know Ray personally, as my daughter, Abby, has dated his son Nathaniel for a number of years. He was a good man, and I was glad to have been able to know him before he passed. We will all greatly miss him.

HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY CLARA  
WILLIAMS

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 9, 2024*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all South Carolinians, I am grateful to wish Mrs. Clara Singleton Williams a happy 100th birthday.

Clara Williams, a native of South Carolina, was born on April 9, 1924, to parents Isaiah Singleton and Annie Livingston Singleton. She attended schools in Fairfield, Aiken, and Orangeburg County, where she graduated from Wilkerson High School. After, she furthered her education at Claflin University for two years.

In 1946, Clara married Blanton Everett Williams, and together they had eleven children, twenty-nine grandchildren, forty-five great grandchildren, and three great-great grandchildren. They purchased land and a home in Salley, South Carolina, where to this day Clara enjoys watching her vegetables and flowers grow. Blanton and Clara were happily married for sixty-one years until his death in 2007.

Clara lives each day to the fullest with warm-hearted memories. Over the years, she has embraced diverse pursuits, including

cooking, canning, farming, quilting, and caring for babies, all while dedicatedly managing her household and working for Aiken County Public Schools. Her spirit of generosity shines through in her unwavering commitment to caring for others. Whether tending to her own children and many grandchildren or extending her kindness to members of her community, Clara's compassion knows no bounds.

As a devout Christian, Clara acknowledged her faith at an early age and was baptized at

Good Hope Baptist Church in Ridgeway, South Carolina. She later became a member of Samaria Baptist Church in Springfield, South Carolina, where she still faithfully attends. Her love for both her church and her family is palpable, evident in her years of dedicated service to both.

At the age of 100, Clara has witnessed many significant landmarks of American history: the Great Depression, World War II, *Briggs v. Elliott*, *Brown v. Board of Education*,

the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Cold War, 9/11, and the first African American President of the United States.

Today, I honor Mrs. Clara Singleton Williams and wish her a happy 100th birthday. I am pleased to join her family and friends in congratulating her on this remarkable milestone.