

"Whether it's Reid or Obama, when given a choice between the District and their own political fortunes, they'll choose their own political fortunes."

In February 2011, Zherka and a group of activists stood up at a House subcommittee hearing in protest with red gags in their mouths. A week later, Zherka led a few dozen protesters in a demonstration outside House speaker John Boehner's Capitol Hill apartment. Zherka accused Boehner of hypocrisy for intruding in DC's affairs while simultaneously backing Tea Party calls for small government.

Since the start of DC Vote's Demand Democracy campaign, some 76 people have been arrested—two of them twice.

Zherka believes that for the campaign to succeed, Mayor Gray and other local officials need to take more of a lead. But Gray, council chairman Kwame Brown, and other District officials have been embroiled in scandals that could complicate their case for greater independence.

On The Kojo Nnamdi Show last May, Gray said he saw his arrest as "reigniting" the movement but downplayed the likelihood of a reprise. "What we've got to see," Gray said, "is really a much broader commitment on the part of the 600,000 people who live in this city."

Critics say Zherka has pursued too narrow a strategy and that his success has sidelined other voting-rights groups. Stand Up! for Democracy in DC, a volunteer group pressing for full statehood, was founded in 1997, a year before DC Vote. Anise Jenkins, its president and cofounder, labeled the Utah compromise a "single vote" strategy because it did nothing about Senate representation or statehood.

Mark Plotkin, the Fox 5 political analyst and former WTOP commentator, is a fan of neither Zherka nor Norton. "Cairo, Syria—people are willing to lay down lives," he says. "And here our response is DC Vote? A tepid, timid, timorous, establishment organization that doesn't want to offend anybody and, worse, is an appendage to Eleanor Holmes Norton."

When four Occupy DC protesters went on a hunger strike for District voting rights in December, Zherka issued a statement praising their "courage and conviction" but didn't explicitly endorse the action.

At recent rallies, I heard young Washingtonians express a willingness to "shut the city down," perhaps by blocking major roadways from Maryland and Virginia.

I asked Zherka whether DC Vote would endorse such tactics. "Virginia and Maryland people are family, friends, neighbors," he told me. "There's no reason to inconvenience and punish them."

Protests, Zherka said, "have to be tightly tied to injustice and the people perpetuating it." Hence the demonstrations outside the Capitol and White House, which offer not just the iconography of those buildings but the sight of federal police—not city ones—carting away District residents.

The street protests seem to have chastened some in Congress. GOP threats last year to ban the District's needle-exchange program, undo its gay-marriage law, and permit concealed firearms were all thwarted, sometimes by other Republicans.

In November, Congressman Darrell Issa, the powerful GOP chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, drafted a bill to let the District spend its money without congressional approval, a right local officials have long sought. (DC Vote is opposing the Issa measure for now because a provision would bar locally funded abortions. But Issa has signaled he is open to finding a resolution.)

In February, Obama released a 2013 budget request that promised to "work with Con-

gress and the Mayor to pass legislation to amend the D.C. Home Rule Act to provide the District with local budget autonomy."

But first he has to be reelected. "Right now we have a President who isn't willing to expend a lot of political capital but will sign anything that we get to him," Zherka says. If a Republican wins in November, "all of our calculus will change," with public protests playing an even greater role than they do now.

DC has grown whiter in recent years, with census figures last year showing blacks losing their historic majority. If race had been a subtext of congressional opposition to voting rights, I asked Zherka, shouldn't those demographic shifts, however cynically, alter the political math?

Zherka told me that they had not. The District remains a place that lets gay people marry, permits medical marijuana, and funds abortion for poor women. The city's liberal politics is in some ways the movement's most intractable handicap.

"If DC for some reason became more Republican," Zherka says, "absolutely there would be a different perspective" in Congress.

Last May 11, a month after Mayor Gray was arrested, DC Vote hosted another rally. It was at Upper Senate Park, a leafy trapezoid across from the Capitol.

As supporters gathered by a table piled with T-shirts and bumper stickers, Zherka, in a gray suit and yellow tie, shook hands with the assurance of a seasoned politician. A woman had brought two young boys, and Zherka patted them on the head. "Ah, look at these protesters," he said approvingly. When an aide identified an older man in a blazer and penny loafers as "our most loyal online donor," Zherka unfastened a DC Vote pin from his lapel and pinned it on the donor's.

After the speeches, the Capitol Police arrested eight activists who had blocked a few lanes of traffic and refused to move.

But soon the crowds and police vans were gone. Zherka was eager to get home to Bethesda. His son had a series of exit interviews at Westland Middle School, from which he was graduating. His daughter, a fifth-grader at Westbrook Elementary, was recovering from a stomach bug. He also wanted to catch up with his wife—a lawyer with the Motion Picture Association of America—about a house they were remodeling in Chevy Chase. (They moved in November.)

Just when it seemed everyone had left, a young man in shorts and a soccer shirt pulled up on a ten-speed. "Are you with this group?" he asked.

"I'm the director," Zherka said.

The man told him he wanted to get involved but had questions: Why did the city's website give the impression that the movement was divided, listing not just DC Vote but two other organizations? If the District's population was half black, why were protesters today mostly white?

After Zherka's long day, I wasn't sure how much patience he'd have with a halfhearted supporter who had missed much of the rally for a soccer game on the Mall. But Zherka gave no air of hurry. The movement was less divided than the website suggested, he said, and many African-Americans have turned out at other rallies.

"Come help us organize and help us get out the word—do we have your info?" Zherka said, handing him a card as the sun set behind them. "Shoot me an e-mail. We need a lot of foot soldiers out here."

MEG VAN NESS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 21, 2012

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and applaud Meg Van Ness for receiving the Living Landmarks Award.

The Living Landmark Award is presented by the Golden Landmarks Association, a non-profit organization which works to preserve historic places and educated people about the wonderful history the Golden area has to offer. Meg has been a champion in preserving and promoting the historical integrity of Golden.

Meg Van Ness has had a passion for archaeology since high school. She attended the University of Missouri and later the University of Northern Arizona where she received her Master's in Archaeology. In 1990, six years after she moved to Golden, Meg was appointed to the Golden Historic Preservation Board and remained on the board for ten years.

In 2000, Meg joined the Golden Planning Commission and worked with the community to keep Golden special. Meg worked for 16 years as an archaeological consultant, another 16 years with the Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and is currently the Regional Historic Preservation Officer for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She continues to serve on various outreach programs and committees in Golden.

I am honored to congratulate Meg Van Ness on this well deserved recognition by the Golden Landmarks Association. We all thank her for her advocacy for the Golden community.

HONORING JESSICA THOMPSON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 21, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a very astute young woman from the Second Congressional District, Ms. Jessica Thompson. She has been bestowed the distinction of Salutatorian for the Class of 2012 of Charleston High School in Charleston, Mississippi.

Jessica is an extremely hard worker, and is devoted to academics. She has maintained a position on the Superintendent and Principal Lists throughout high school. In addition to honoring her academic responsibilities, Jessica has also remained dedicated to her extracurricular activities. She has served as the captain of the cheerleading squad, a member of the science club, the Student Council Treasurer, a member of the Future Christian Athletes organization, a National Honor Society member, and as an usher at St. Paul C.M.E. Church.

Jessica will be attending the University of Southern Mississippi as a Lucky-Day Scholar this fall, and plans to major in Kinesiotherapy. After obtaining a bachelor degree in Kinesiotherapy, she plans to become a physical therapist. Jessica does not take her education for granted, because she knows that an education is essential to her hopes of fulfilling

her dreams. Jessica gives the credit of her achievements to her parents, Ms. Lisa Thompson and the late Thomas Thompson, and her twin sister, Eboni, because their support has shaped her into the young woman that she is today.

Mr. Speaker, I ask our colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Jessica Thompson for her unwavering dedication to education, and striving to improve not only her life but the lives of others.

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH 250TH
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
AND WAR OF 1812 COMMEMORATION

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 21, 2012

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a storied institution of faith in Virginia's Third Congressional District. This year, Trinity Episcopal Church in Portsmouth, Virginia is celebrating its 250th anniversary, and I would like to take a moment to reflect on the history of this esteemed church and its contributions to the greater Hampton Roads community.

The story of Trinity Episcopal Church begins in 1752 with William Crawford, the founder of Portsmouth, when he designated space at the intersection of High and Court Streets for a parish church. Between 1761 and 1762, the Vestry of Trinity Church was formed. Reverend Charles Smith served as the first parish priest.

During the American Revolution, the church was used by the British garrison, and Trinity's old church bell was cracked celebrating General Cornwallis' surrender. During the War of 1812, Captain Arthur Emmerson III, a lay leader in the congregation, was instrumental in the American victory at the Battle of Craney Island. During the Civil War, the crew of the ironclad C.S.S. Virginia—commonly called the Merrimack—worshipped at Trinity before boarding the ship to fight in the first battle of the ironclads against the Union ship, U.S.S. Monitor.

Over the years, Trinity continued to grow and expand, and its congregation felt a great sense of community responsibility, contributing to the well-being of the City of Portsmouth, surrounding neighborhoods and area churches. In the 1890s, Trinity founded the King's Daughters Hospital, which later became Portsmouth General Hospital. In the 1960s, under its noted Rector, the Rev. C. Charles Vaché, the congregation was active in the civil rights movement and endorsed the equality of all persons. Its members support organizations such as Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless, Oasis Social Ministry Center, and other social agencies, providing breakfasts, dinners, overnight accommodations, and financial support to those in need. Trinity is best known for its Annual Children's Christmas Shoppe, where hundreds of children, guided by members of the parish and community disguised as "elves," can do their own shopping for loved ones. The Episcopal Church Women and the Brotherhood of Trinity take on additional local, national and even international community service projects of their own.

Yet another longstanding Trinity tradition worthy of note is its music. Mentions of organists and accompanying choirs date back to 1823. Instruments housed at Trinity are revered as representative early-American works by their crafters. The choir has received acclaim dating back to the 1860s, when the Rt. Rev. John Johns, Bishop of Virginia, called the Trinity Choir "the best in the diocese." Today, the Trinity Music Series features local musical ensembles and world-renowned artists, working with the Virginia Arts Festival and other community organizations to provide quality music services, recitals and concerts to the public free of charge.

As Trinity Episcopal Church gathers to celebrate this historic milestone, the church can truly remember its past, celebrate its present, and focus on its future. I would like to congratulate Rev. John R. Throop, D. Min., and all of the members of the Trinity Episcopal Church on the occasion of their 250th Anniversary. I wish them many more years of dedicated service to the community.

IN TRIBUTE TO RON PLOTKIN

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 21, 2012

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to a constituent and friend, Ron Plotkin, who will be rightfully honored this weekend by the Republican Jewish Coalition at its 2012 RJC Summer Bash.

An ardent Zionist and member of the Republican Jewish Coalition's Board of Directors, Ron has committed himself to educating the voting public and supporting Republican candidates who understand the unique relationship between Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, and the United States.

In addition, Ron is a highly successful Los Angeles-based international business executive and philanthropist who has made his mark in corporate marketing and advertising. As a partner and Chief Operating Officer of TMP Worldwide, he was instrumental in building the company into the world's largest "yellow pages" advertising agency.

The next global move was to cofound and develop the largest jobs website on the Internet, Monster.com. He is now Chief Executive Officer of Directional Marketing at Monster Worldwide.

Ron is an active investor in small technology start-up companies based on unique concepts that have the potential to be cutting-edge ground-breakers in very competitive fields.

His career in Yellow Pages began in 1975 with the L.M. Berry Co. where he held a number of positions that progressed to sales management at its headquarters in Dayton, Ohio. In 1986, he became an equity partner in CPC (Communications Planning Corporation) and shortly afterward, he entered into a partnership arrangement with TMP Worldwide, and officially joined the company on July 1, 1988.

He is also an Executive Advisory Board Member of the Cabrillo Music Theatre, Inc. and a Board Member of the Association of Directory Marketing, Inc.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure my colleagues join the Republican Jewish Coalition and me in

honoring Ron for his tireless efforts on behalf of democracy both here at home and with our strong ally Israel.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CITY OF
HILLSBOROUGH'S ADOPTION OF
H&H COMPANY, 1ST BATTALION,
327TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, 1ST
BRIGADE, 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 21, 2012

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the City of Hillsborough for its adoption in 2007 of H&H Company, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.

In 1967 a soldier in Vietnam named Sgt. Joe Artavia wrote a letter to his sister, Linda Patterson, asking her to convince the City of San Mateo to adopt his company. He thought an adoption would lift troop morale "as high as the sky." Patterson rallied the community to support her brother and his comrades. Within three months the San Mateo City Council passed a resolution to adopt the company.

Tragically, Artavia was killed three weeks later rescuing a fellow soldier, and the people of San Mateo joined together in mourning. Artavia's death solidified San Mateo's commitment to its adopted company and, in fact, in 1972 San Mateo was the only city in the United States to hold an official homecoming parade honoring Vietnam veterans.

Working with Patterson and the city of Burlingame, Hillsborough adopted its own company of the 101st Airborne Division in 2007. Since that time the city has continuously supported the H&H Company, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, sending care packages, writing letters and supporting the families of soldiers who are deployed.

In a few months Hillsborough's adopted company will be re-deployed for another tour in Afghanistan. In commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the original welcoming-home parade, a new parade and festival are being held to honor past and present soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House of Representatives join me in honoring the city of Hillsborough for supporting HHC 1st Brigade Combat Team 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and its brave men and women who fill its ranks, especially those who gave their lives for our freedom.

YIMI SERRANO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 21, 2012

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Yimi Serrano for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Yimi Serrano is an 11th grader at Jefferson Senior High and received this award because his determination