

Lewis And Wilkins in Indianapolis. Indianapolis Monthly characterized Paul last month as a long-time supporter of the city's art community. Kathryn's paternal grandparents are Pat and Val Mullin, retired, and residents of Nashville, Indiana. Pat had a career in sales and Val was a high school English teacher. Kathryn's maternal great-grandfather, Charles Richard Paul, 96 years old, originally from Evansville, is still an active stockbroker and will be teaching Kathryn the importance of trading with puts and calls starting in a few years. Although she does not realize it yet, Kathryn's best friend is Noor, the family dog. I congratulate the entire Mullin family on the birth of Kathryn and wish her a long, happy life.

SALVADORAN ARCHBISHOP
OSCAR ROMERO: A SAINT FOR
ALL OF US

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, October 14, the Vatican officially canonized Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was assassinated on March 24, 1980, on the eve of El Salvador's 12-year civil war.

In a ceremony presided over by Pope Francis, the first pope from Latin America, Romero will become a saint alongside Pope Paul VI, Italian priests Francesco Spinelli and Vincenzo Romano, German nun Maria Caterina Kasper, and Spanish nun Nazaria Ignazia. The canonizations will take place at the Vatican during the 2018 Synod of Bishops, a meeting of bishops from around the world that this year will address the topic of young people, who were much beloved by Archbishop Romero.

In attendance will be many Salvadorans and Latin Americans, including a delegation from the United States who are current beneficiaries of Temporary Protected Status (TPS), an immigration status, which President Trump has stripped from over 260,000 Salvadorans currently residing legally in the United States because it's simply too dangerous for them to return home.

In May 2015, I had the privilege of attending the beatification of Romero in San Salvador. Surrounded by many high religious and government officials, especially from Latin America, I was most moved by the hundreds of thousands of ordinary Salvadorans, many who had traveled for days from rural areas to attend this special mass. While they likely would have preferred to see him canonized in his home country, they can only be overjoyed that the name and message of "Saint Romero of the Americas" will now be shared with the world.

As a Catholic, I am proud of my Church for finally recognizing this man of God who lived his faith. As a politician, I continue to be inspired by Romero's example—his total commitment to the poor and his unwavering commitment to the dignity of every human being.

Romero was shot through the heart by a sniper while celebrating mass in the chapel of the Hospital of Divine Providence, a church-run hospital in San Salvador specializing in cancer and care of the terminally ill, which still

operates today and maintains as a shrine the humble dwelling where Romero resided on their grounds.

He was murdered the day after he called on the Salvadoran military to stop killing innocent civilians at the beginning of El Salvador's civil war. The U.N. Truth Commission, created as part of the negotiations that ended that war, determined that Roberto D'Aubuisson, a former army major and founder of the right-wing ARENA political party, coordinated a death squad and ordered the assassination.

Romero's calls to end the violence afflicting his nation and his solidarity with El Salvador's poor appealed to me as a college student in the late 1970s. I still remember learning about his murder and believing that this terrible crime would result in the termination of U.S. aid to a government and military that persecuted social justice activists and had no respect for human rights. Sadly, it did not.

The U.S. continued to finance the Salvadoran armed forces for the next decade. While Congress expressed concern about human rights issues, it wasn't until Congressman Joe Moakley courageously offered and Congress passed an amendment in 1990 to cut aid that the blank check stopped. And that was after the deaths of nearly 80,000 civilians, the murder of human rights defenders, labor leaders, nuns and then six Jesuit priests and two women in 1989. I traveled to El Salvador many times during the 1980s and saw firsthand the brutality of the Salvadoran government and military supported by my government. I felt ashamed.

Reagan and Bush Administration officials routinely turned a blind eye to torture, disappearances and murder. They characterized anyone who questioned the human rights record of the Salvadoran government as an ally of the Faribundo Marti National Liberation Army (FMLN)—the armed opposition. They belittled and tried to discredit those—like Romero and the Jesuits—who dared to speak the truth.

For Romero, the truth about El Salvador came later in his life, as he rose in the Church hierarchy. In the mid-1970s, he served as bishop of the rural diocese of Santiago de Maria, where the gap between coffee plantation and other landowners and campesinos was obvious. He saw for himself the suffering and cruel repression of the poor, which affected him deeply and triggered a process of reflection and change. This process culminated in the 1977 assassination of his close friend, Jesuit priest Rutilio Grande, who embraced liberation theology, which puts the poor and the oppressed first and prioritizes the concrete defense of their rights. After Grande's murder, Romero said, "When I look at Rutilio lying dead I thought, 'If they have killed him for doing what he did, then I, too, have to walk the same path.'" Indeed, Romero believed "those committed to the poor must share the same fate as the poor."

Romero became a voice for those who had no voice; he preached that everyone was important. He embodied hope for the millions of people in El Salvador who were forgotten and the targets of repression. In his diaries, he wrote: "Between the powerful and the wealthy, and the poor and vulnerable, who should a pastor side with? I have no doubts. A pastor should stay with his people."

To his dying day, Archbishop Romero called on us to unite in love for the poor, the

marginalized and the forgotten. The ceremony this weekend will finally recognize him as a saint. It offers all of us an opportunity not only to reflect on Romero's life, but also to commit ourselves to policies aimed at peace, human rights, alleviating poverty and promoting non-violence in El Salvador and around the world.

The sad fact is that El Salvador and the international community have largely failed in transforming Romero's words into action. We continue to witness thousands of young children and families fleeing Central American countries as a result of violence and extreme poverty. Even in the United States, the gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow and justice on too many occasions fails to work for those who are most disadvantaged. Hundreds of millions around the world are hungry—even though hunger is a solvable problem; and war and violence too often seem to be the first choice to deal with conflicts.

I am hopeful that the power of Romero's message can inspire new activism on behalf of the marginalized and the poor and a better understanding of their plight and struggles—in El Salvador, the United States and around the world. Romero reminded us, "There are many things that can only be seen through eyes that have cried." With his canonization, we have an opportunity to renew our commitment and honor his legacy by giving a voice to the persecuted, the poor and neglected in every nation. Now is the time to stand on the right side of history and help those who need it most.

HONORING SALLY SERGER WITH
CALIFORNIA'S THIRD DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sally Serger as a woman of the year. As a dedicated educator who is passionate about her family and community, Ms. Sally Serger has devoted over 25 years of her life to teaching deaf and hard-of-hearing special-needs children in Oroville for the Sutter County Office of Education. With her persistence and positivity, she has been able to touch the lives of countless children who otherwise might not receive the patient care and instruction so critical to their development. It is a point of pride for Ms. Serger when she has the opportunity to interact with the students who she has seen grow into successful young adults throughout her career. Ms. Serger also spends time volunteering in myriad other capacities throughout her community. She is a member of the California Women for Agriculture, the La Porte Snowmobile Club, and has served for over 30 years as a project and community leader for the renowned 4-H Program. When one considers that 4-H seeks to engage youth in reaching their fullest potential, it is no surprise to learn that Ms. Serger has chosen to spend her time with this organization. In addition to her work as an educator, Ms. Serger has been a consistent force in improving the western bank of the Feather River, and by diligently advocating for her community, she became instrumental in securing local funding for the strengthening of Sutter

County levees. Ms. Serger's passion, dedication, and diligence in all facets of her life are truly worthy of recognition.

CONSTITUENT COMMENTS ON
SOBER LIVING HOME PROBLEMS

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise again regarding the hearing held by the Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice on September 28, 2018 on the issue of sober living homes. At that hearing, I had the privilege of testifying in support of my bill, H.R. 5724, to restore local oversight over sober living homes. As part of my testimony, I submitted to the Subcommittee letters from many of my constituents about problems with sober living homes caused by current federal law preventing appropriate local oversight. For the benefit of my colleagues and the American people, I include in the RECORD the fourth group of these constituent letters below:

A sober living home was across the street from me and my family for one year. Three more were around the block from me and those residents did not have parking. Our street was filled with parked cars going directly into these sober living homes. In addition, our streets were constantly littered with trash, needles & cigarette buds. Since friends of SLHs are not allowed to go within a certain distance to the SLH property, young male adults would sit under my basketball hoop smoking cigarettes in front of my then 12 and 10-year-old kids, waiting for the occupants to come outside. The police were called on at least 3 occasions with problems with the house across from me, and numerous occasions with the homes around the block. I have witnessed 3 clients of SLHs being taken away on stretchers in ambulances, with police involvement. Young adults who relapse or are kicked out of SLHs run amok through our residential streets breaking into cars and houses, buying and selling drugs in our neighborhoods filled with children. The amount of SLHs in Costa Mesa are a major problem, just ask our CMPD and businesses throughout our city. Our CM City Council wants to reduce the amount of SLHs in residential neighborhoods based on complaints from residents and businesses. Every city should have a say in this and be able to vote on local ordinances. Thank you in advance for considering this bill.

KEITH FRAINIE,
Costa Mesa, California.

The house next door to me was purchased by an investor who owned numerous sober living facilities in Costa Mesa and throughout Orange County. His company name was [REDACTED]. The owner is [NAME]. He remodeled the home and told me he was going to sell it. He rented it to a chain of rehab locations [REDACTED] that was finally exposed as fraudulent and closed. Then rented it again to another rehab company. In 7 years I was victimized as a single senior who had been a resident for 25 years in the same location. Constant turmoil, chain smoking, profanity, etc. I reported all to the state, code enforcement, and city officials. My health was seriously affected to the point of surgery and trauma therapy. I tried to pay for 1/2 of a block wall, to rent the house to another tenant, and pleaded to no avail with

the owner. All of the complaints are on record even the meetings in person with the owner of the rehab with code enforcement. I was told my property value had decreased by 40-60% because of the neighbors. There are numerous empty commercial facilities that can be used for this purpose. As a volunteer for [REDACTED] for 30 years I empathize with their cause, but not at the cost of serious illness and trauma to their neighbors. Contact numbers provided were not answered, staff was transient and unavailable, even the state Department of Health said they would not come from Sacramento to investigate and even if they did they would not be able to catch them in the act. Please for all parties concerned confine rehab facilities to commercial buildings not to residential neighborhoods. Thank you.

MARILYN BROOKS,
Costa Mesa, California.

I like to share with Congress that my representative, Dana Rohrabacher, is misleading his constituency once again. He has neglected to share the first line of the summary with us and is trying to create a law to pander to his base. The summary reads:

Shown Here: Introduced in House (05/09/2018) Restoring Community Oversight of Sober Living Homes Act of 2018.

This bill amends the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to remove substance use disorder services from the list of essential health benefits that must be covered by health plans.

The bill also amends the Fair Housing Act to address state and local zoning laws regarding recovery facilities (buildings that are occupied by individuals who are handicapped by drug addiction or alcoholism and that prohibit controlled substances and alcohol). The bill specifies that federal anti-discrimination laws do not bar any state or local zoning laws that prohibit recovery facilities in residential areas. Recovery facilities must also comply with all state and local zoning laws in order to receive federal funds.

I do not approve of this bill or my representative.

I look forward to my story being inserted into the hearing record and the Congressional Record. Or is that just for people who agree with you?

DEBORAH WILDER,
Westminster, California.

My husband and I bought our house in 2001 and have lived here ever since. In fact, I grew up in this tract in a home on the other side of [REDACTED] Middle School, as have many of the neighbors. I can tell you it is a quiet, safe neighborhood where people take care of their homes and generally take pride in their surroundings. This past April the house next door sold [REDACTED], owned by [NAME], and turned into what we later learned was a Sober Living house, registered for up to five females. In reality, the house is less of a sober living house and more of a quasi "half-way house"/"drug house".

The house is a 5 bedroom/2 bath house with a two-car garage. What initially started as more of an inconvenience due to the multiple cars coming and going, blocking our drive way, and actually backing into my 77-year old mother's car when she came to visit, has turned into something much more disturbing. Several of the initial residents who portrayed themselves to my husband as a couple of college students and friends, have long since moved out. Multiple other residents have arrived, stayed a few days, and left. Aside from overgrown grass, their dogs left outside overnight barking incessantly, and visitors at all hours of the night, the situation has grown more concerning.

In the early morning hours of Friday, August 24th, the neighborhood was awoken to multiple police cars in the area, two to three at any time parked in front of my house with lights flashing as they are interviewing one of the primary residents next door as an apparent drug sale went bad. This carried on for several hours as helicopters hovered over the neighborhood looking for several people that took off on foot. We later learned that several of these individuals were running from back yard to back yard down the street, knocking on windows, causing fear in the neighborhood. We later learned the next morning looking at video from our Arlo cameras that one of the individuals involved actually walked up to our front door and attempted to knock, before leaving. We also learned after looking at video taken from the neighbors across the street that a white truck carrying several of the individuals involved with the incident actually pulled into our driveway. This video was offered to the police and our video of the evening was forwarded to HBPD referencing Incident [REDACTED]. Whether they confused our house with the next-door house, or whether they meant to pull in to our driveway we will never know. But nonetheless, having someone pull into your driveway, drop off several people looking to either buy or sell or use drugs, walk up to your doorstep and then proceed to try and disrupt your neighborhood by running through backyards in the middle of the night is unacceptable.

In addition to pulling into our driveway and trespassing through our yard and attempting to knock on our door in the middle of the night, several people were discovered on the street adjacent to our house apparently using narcotics. Upon police arrival, they ran leaving an amount of narcotics deemed trafficking. One of the individuals trespassed across our property in an attempt to evade the police only to drop his wallet on our front yard and a compact multi-use tool with hammer on our driveway. HBPD gathered the evidence from us the following morning after we reported it.

In summary, in the four short months since [NAME] (address listed at [ADDRESS]) has owned the home and chosen to take on the liability associated with renting his property out as a quasi "Sober Living"/"Halfway House"/"Drug House", the situation has escalated from being that of a nuisance to being criminal and having the very likely probability of negatively impacting property values, endangering children at [REDACTED] Middle School just around the corner and if not stopped, being the beginning of blight in Huntington Beach.

KRISTEN SANDBERG,
Huntington Beach, California.

I have seen the city of Costa Mesa go from a friendly, safe, community neighborhood when I grew up during the 70's and 80's to a drug and homeless infested area that is almost unrecognizable. I cannot believe our local government has no power in regulating the number of sober living homes. Please take a moment to check for how many SLH are in just Costa Mesa. There needs to be a way where the drug users can get help but not at the expense of the local residents. By allowing such a large concentration of SLH's in the city I fear for the safety of children and women. Please allow the local government to set standards and volume of SLH's allowed. When the patient is being treated at a SLH if their treatment fails or if their money runs out they are often displaced onto the streets of the city they are housed in. Just knowing this you can imagine how many homeless people in Costa Mesa come from these homes. That does not allow for the fact of how noisy, dirty, and unsafe these