

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND CULTURE
20TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO
SABLAN**

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, this year the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History and Culture celebrates its 20th anniversary.

Our islands' only, locally-run museum is as much a tribute to the story of the people of the Marianas as it is to the resilience and determination of those who have led the Museum's operation. They have kept the Museum alive despite many years of inadequate funding, understaffing, and a destructive typhoon that could well have shut it down permanently.

The Museum is located in a 92-year-old hospital built during the time the Northern Marianas were under the administration of Japan. The structure itself is an artifact of our history, and before its renovation looked the part. Its concrete, paint-less exterior told the story of war and every typhoon that has passed through our islands in the last century.

Today, within the Museum a visitor can view artifacts from the time of the ancient Chamorro people, and of the Spanish, German, and Japanese occupations that descended upon us. These artifacts, and the paintings and photographs that are part of the displays, tell the story of how our people survived, adapted, and thrived throughout our history. They—and other objects stored away in the Museum—are lovingly preserved by their local conservators, who exhibit a profound dedication to keeping the memories of our people alive.

The NMI Museum of History and Culture is an independent program of our Governor's Office. Sadly, the facility fell on hard times in the mid-2000s, when massive budget cuts forced the lay-off of most staff. At this low point, the Museum had only one employee, whose availability determined when the museum would open and close. As a result, many a visitor was turned away who could have experienced the history of the Chamorro people.

In 2015, the Marianas were hit by Typhoon Soudelor, the most devastating typhoon in decades. That terrible storm could well have meant the end for our Museum. The typhoon left many artifacts damaged, the roof leaking, mold along the walls, floors flooded, and much of the plumbing a wreck. And the museum was forced to close its doors to visitors—definitely.

Into this scene of destruction a new energy arrived in the person of Mr. Danny Aquino. Appointed Executive Director last year, Mr. Aquino was tasked with the grueling repair of the museum.

And more help was on the way. An outpouring of financial and material support from IT&E, Saipan Stevedore, Saipan Shipping, CMS Trucking, Soudelor Corporation, Tropical Gardens, and other local businesses, a

\$55,000 appropriation from the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation, and \$50,000 from the Marianas Visitors Authority gave Aquino and his team the funds to start repairs.

Help from the staff of the Mayor of Saipan also moved the work along at a faster pace. The Mayor's team assisted museum staff with grounds maintenance, landscaping, and other outdoor work. Somehow, restoration took less than six months to complete; and the Museum reopened last November to its first visitors in a very long time.

I visited the museum in February to see this progress. I had been there shortly after Typhoon Soudelor; and I can report the difference between then and now is night and day. Mr. Aquino's can-do attitude, and the tireless work of his staff—James Cabrera, James Macaranas, Allan Lifoifoi, and Wenny Haruo—drove the repair efforts and the result is a museum that the Marianas can truly be proud of.

Today, visitors to our islands can orient themselves to the three-and-a-half millennia of Marianas history at our Museum. Residents can take pride in who they are and where they come from by strolling through this beautiful facility. And students—many of whom are required to take a course on the history of our islands—can enlarge their vision of the future by learning about our past at the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History and Culture.

Please join me in congratulating the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History and Culture on 20 years of serving our islands and our people.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND: AN
UPDATE ON THE GOLDMAN ACT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we held a hearing on parental child abduction. International parental child abduction rips children from their homes and whisks them away to a foreign land, alienating them from the love and care of the parent and family left behind.

Child abduction is child abuse, and it continues to plague families across the United States.

According to State Department statistics, almost 800 children are today held hostage in a foreign country, separated from their American parent. Several hundred additional children join their ranks every year.

If past is prologue, only 16 percent of these children will be returned to the United States.

In 2014, Congress adopted legislation I wrote, the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act (Public Law 113–150) to change the status quo. Since 2014, we have seen a reduction in new abductions, but not an increase in percentage of returns in ongoing cases.

Despite the new legislation, the State Department has persistently refused to use the return tools in the Goldman Act as envisioned by Congress. Moving beyond letters and meetings, the Goldman Act is an enforcement tool for the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and leverage for return agreements with non-Hague countries.

The Goldman Act takes the lessons learned from the successful return of Sean Goldman from Brazil and lays out actions: a delay or cancellation of one or more bilateral working, official, or state visits; the withdrawal, limitation, or suspension of U.S. development, security, or economic support assistance; and extradition.

To my knowledge, extradition has been used once and the other options not at all. The Obama State Department said in the past that sanctions will not work. But in the one case where sanctions were tried by Congress, they worked.

The inaction by the Obama Administration has been noted and challenged. On February 14 of 2017, one month into the new Trump Administration, Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fumio Kishida, noted in a Diet discussion of abduction that, "until now there is not a single example in which the U.S. applied [Goldman Act sanctions] towards foreign countries." He went on to note that "according to the U.S. [Japan is] not included in the category of the non-compliant countries."

Three days later, the Osaka High Court overturned a return order for the four American children of James Cook in flagrant violation of the Hague Convention, Japan's own Hague implementation guide, and U.S. law. The court had reopened the case because Mr. Cook had moved into an apartment after the enormous legal bills from years in court in Japan. When did sharing a bedroom with a sibling become a grave risk to a child's physical or psychological well-being?

I urge and believe the new administration can and must do better.

At least 300 to 400 children have suffered abduction from the U.S. to Japan since 1994, and more than 35 currently await reunification with their American parent—most of these are left over from previous Administrations. In almost all cases, the child is completely cut off from contact with the left behind parent. Most have aged out of the system without ever being reunited with their left behind parent.

Some parents have won in court only to find that Japan's law enforcement could not return their children unless the taking parent agreed to abide by the decision, and the taking parent did not.

The systematic non-enforcement of access and return orders is so bad in Japan that 26 EU countries recently issued a joint demarche to Japan, asking Japan to fix the problem. Although non-enforcement has plagued many U.S. cases, the U.S. did not join the demarche.

However, in the upcoming Goldman Act report, the U.S. has the chance to hold Japan

• 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.

accountable for its failures in the Cook case as well as others, like that of the Elias children, taken from my home state of New Jersey after their mother obtained duplicate passports from the Japanese consulate in contravention of the judge's order. The report can and must better reflect the reality of the child abduction and the suffering of American children separated from their American parent every day in Japan.

According to the Goldman Act, a country can find itself on the "non-compliance list" and eligible for sanctions if a country regularly fails to enforce return orders. The State Department should also put the country on the list if the judiciary regularly fails to properly apply the Hague Convention—such as in the Cook case.

Finally, a country should be put on the "non-compliance list" if 30 percent or more cases in the country are unresolved cases—or cases that have been pending for more than a year.

Notably, the definition of an "unresolved" case makes no mention of a country's Hague status. In other words, all of the cases that began before Japan's accession to the Hague Convention and that were communicated to the Japanese government should be counted against Japan.

No child should be left behind.

We received assurances from the State Department years ago, as they myopically pursued Japan's accession to the Hague Convention knowing that the Convention would not cover the then existing cases of more than 50 children, that they would not leave these children behind.

That they would find ways to solve these cases.

How many of these children have come home four years later? How many even have access to their left behind parent now?

Almost zero.

The Goldman Act directed the State Department to develop an agreement with Japan for the precious children that were already abducted. The Goldman Act made a way for the State Department to hold Japan accountable for these cases.

Four years later, we have no agreement with Japan for these cases. We have no action against Japan for these cases or current cases. And we have yet to see the State Department even list Japan as "non-compliant" in the annual report.

Every day these children are separated from their US parent the damage compounds.

As the State Department's own 2010 Report on Compliance with The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction observes, "Abducted children are at risk of serious emotional and psychological problems. Research shows that recovered children often experience a range of problems, including anxiety, eating problems, nightmares, mood swings, sleep disturbances, aggressive behavior, resentment, guilt, and fearfulness. As adults, individuals who were abducted as children may struggle with identity issues, personal relationships, and possibly experience problems in parenting their own children."

We must do better by our children. We must not leave any abducted child behind.

Congress is currently looking at new ways to put pressure on countries with low resolution rates, like Japan, Brazil, and India.

Last year, I introduced H.R. 3512, the Bindu Philips and Devon Davenport International

Child Abduction Return Act of 2017 to amend the Generalized System of Preferences system so that any country named as "non-compliant" would lose their trade benefits. The loss of trade preference would be automatic and not dependent on the Administration choosing to apply sanctions. Currently, 11 of 13 non-compliant countries receive trade benefits from the United States. This has to change.

In addition, I am working on a bill that would limit H1-B and other business visas for countries that have low abduction resolution rates—this would affect Japan, Brazil, and India, among others.

We have 13 egregious long term cases pending in Brazil, including the Dr. Brann and Davenport cases. More than 90 American children are separated from their American parent in India—India will not even appoint a person to receive the applications and has refused to join the Hague Convention.

We asked in our hearing last year, when is enough, enough?

We hope that the State Department will do its job and implement the Goldman Act. We hope that the Trump Administration will be different than the last.

But we are prepared to go around the State Department in order to ensure no abducted child is left behind.

YADIRA TISCARENO ESCALERA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Yadira Tiscareno Escalera for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Yadira Tiscareno Escalera is a student at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Yadira Tiscareno Escalera is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Yadira Tiscareno Escalera for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO IVY BOTTINI—28TH
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding

women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Ivy Bottini, of West Hollywood, California.

Ivy Bottini is a legendary activist, professional artist, mother, award-winning actress, and community leader. Renowned from coast to coast for her feminism and fight for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community, she paved the way for many of the advances in civil and human rights we enjoy today.

Ivy was a founding member of the first chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. She designed the iconic logo for the organization, which is still in use today. In August of 1970 Ivy and over 150 of her fellow activists made headlines by unveiling a banner reading "Women of the World Unite" over the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty.

Ivy moved to Los Angeles in 1971, and from the time she set foot in the community, she has been working to improve the quality of life for its people. She speaks her mind and amplifies the voices of those in need around her. She founded AIDS Network LA, Los Angeles' first AIDS organization and the Los Angeles Lesbian/Gay Police Advisory Board, co-founded AIDS Project LA and served for over 15 years on the West Hollywood Lesbian and Gay Advisory Board. In 1981, she was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown to the California Commission on Aging making Ivy the first "out" lesbian or gay person to be appointed to a state board or commission. She was instrumental as an advocate for affordable housing for Gay and Lesbian seniors in the opening of "Triangle Square," the first in the nation assisted living, affordable income apartment complex for LGBT elders.

Over the years, Ivy has received numerous recognitions for her years of service and most recently, she was recognized as the 2016 Woman of the Year for the 3rd Supervisorial District of the County of Los Angeles and as the 2017 Woman of the Year for the 50th Assembly District of the State of California.

Ivy is an inspiration throughout the country. Her life's work is an example of finding one's voice and using it forcefully for the benefit of all Americans.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring this exceptional, well-respected woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Ivy Bottini.

IN HONOR OF MS. SHERRY KOLBE

HON. ROD BLUM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable woman and native Iowan from Marshalltown, Iowa. Ms. Sherry Kolbe has dedicated her career to the National Association of Private Special Education Centers. NAPSEC advocates for the needs of children with severe disabilities. Having served as the Executive Director for 28 years, Ms. Kolbe has impacted the lives of hundreds of children.

We congratulate Ms. Kolbe as she prepares for retirement. After years of hard work, she deserves the utmost respect for her distinguished career and should be assured that new leadership at NAPSEC will benefit from her outstanding example.