

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF KENNETH ABRAHAMIAN

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 27, 2019

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the life of Mr. Kenneth Abrahamian. Kenneth was a distinguished military veteran and community member in Fresno, California. He will be greatly missed by those who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Kenneth was born on November 21, 1923 to Abraham and Aurora Abrahamian, Armenian immigrants who came to the United States in search of the American dream. He was raised in Rolinda, California, where hard work was instilled in him from a young age. Kenneth graduated from Central Union High School in 1941 and began working at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, California. He worked on building WWII submarines, before enlisting in the United States Navy at the age of 18. He served on the *USS Spangler* and *USS Ajax*.

After returning home from military service, he met and married the love of his life, Isabelle Zadurian. They were happily married for 72 years and were parents to three children. Kenneth began to farm during the day and attended night school to become a plumber. Throughout his career, he worked on numerous projects throughout the Central Valley, such as the San Luis Project, Balsam Meadows Hydroelectric Project and was a proud member of Local 246 for 70 years. However, as his farming operation expanded, he eventually returned to farming full time.

Kenneth was active in the Kearney Park community. He forged many lifelong friendships and was well-liked and respected. Kenneth was a proud member in his church, Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church. Madam Speaker, I would like to note the Abrahamian family were dear friends of my parents and me. As a young boy, I have fond memories of spending time with their family and growing up with their children. It was also a pleasure to be able to be a part of what Kenneth called “a trip of a lifetime,” in which he traveled to Washington, DC, for the Central Valley Honor Flight. My office also worked to secure his well-earned medals from his time in the service.

Kenneth was preceded in death by his infant son, and brothers, Gabriel, Leon, and Richard. He is survived by his wife, Isabelle, their children Jeanette, Patricia, and Kenneth, his grandchildren, great-grandson and many beloved friends and family members.

Madam Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Mr. Kenneth Abrahamian. It is my honor to join his family and many friends in celebrating his life.

IN HONOR OF NICK BUONICONTO

HON. DONNA E. SHALALA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 27, 2019

Ms. SHALALA. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of my friend Nick Buoniconti, the hu-

manitarian and football legend who contributed to two Miami Dolphins Super Bowl wins in the 1970s. He passed away on July 30, 2019, at the age of 78.

Mr. Buoniconti grew up in Springfield, Massachusetts, before enrolling in Notre Dame, where he began his football career. Small for the N.F.L., he began playing for the American Football League (A.F.L.) in 1962. An ambitious student as well as an excellent athlete, he studied at the Suffolk University School of Law in Boston during his tenure with the Patriots, graduating with his law degree in 1968.

Mr. Buoniconti was traded to the Miami Dolphins in 1969. After the A.F.L. and N.F.L. merged, he helped the Dolphins win the Super Bowl VII, capping off a season in which the team went undefeated. The Dolphins continued to dominate the next year, winning the following Super Bowl as well. Mr. Buoniconti played with the team through 1976, when he retired from professional football.

In 1985, Mr. Buoniconti's son Marc sustained a spinal cord injury in a college football game that left him paralyzed from the neck down. Mr. Buoniconti left his job at U.S. Tobacco to focus on his son's health and support the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, of which Marc Buoniconti currently serves as president. The Miami Project is a Center of Excellence at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, where I have seen the groundbreaking research it has supported in the fields of spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries. Mr. Buoniconti and his family also founded the Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis, which has raised over \$500 million in support of the Miami Project's research objectives.

Nick Buoniconti dedicated his life to excellence, both in his football career and in his work with the Miami Project. His influence will be felt in Miami for years to come. We will remember him with love and pride.

RECOGNIZING LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS WATER CHALLENGE

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 27, 2019

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the League of Women Voters of JoDaviess County for winning the Water Quality Challenge put on by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The League of Women Voters won this challenge by showing how an edge-of-field sensor system could support farmers in reducing nitrogen loss from their fields.

The League of Women Voters worked to combat one of the most challenging water quality problems in our nation. In doing so, they identified creative ways to use low-cost tools to understand our resources and better advise nutrient management decisions. The installed sensors provide real-time data to best inform and guide farm-scale management decisions. They showed innovation, passion, and a drive to help our environment. Participation in this challenge strengthened the connections between scientists, advocates, and farmers in JoDaviess County and Northwest Illinois. The prize will be used to continue to build a model of cooperative problem-solving and improve water quality in the Driftless Area of Northwest Illinois.

It is because of community leaders such as the League of Women Voters of Illinois that I am especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District. Madam Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate the Illinois League of Women Voters on their initiative in the Water Quality Challenge put on by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

INTRODUCTION OF THE UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ACT OF 2019

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 27, 2019

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce a bill similar to one I have introduced in six previous Congresses, the Universal Pre-kindergarten and Early Childhood Education Act of 2019. My bill would establish and expand prekindergarten programs in public and public charter schools for three- and four-year-old children. The District of Columbia has made considerable strides since I first introduced this bill, but today's bill is still needed for the nation to fill a gap in the “Every Student Succeeds Act,” which addresses elementary and secondary education, but ignores the prekindergarten years, the most critical years for children's brain development.

My bill seeks a breakthrough in public education by providing funding for states to add prekindergarten for children at three and four years of age, like kindergarten programs for five-year-olds now routinely available in public schools. This bill would eliminate major shortcomings of unevenly available “day care” and, importantly, would take advantage of the safe facilities required in public schools. Unless early education becomes a necessary part of a child's education, it almost surely will continue to be unavailable to the majority of families with children.

My bill provides federal funds to states, which must be matched by at least 20 percent of a state's own funds; to establish or expand universal, voluntary prekindergarten in public and public charter schools for three- and four-year-olds, regardless of income. The classes, which would be full-day and run throughout the entire school year, must be taught by teachers who possess equivalent or similar qualifications to those teaching other grades in the school. The funds would supplement, not supplant, other federal funds for early childhood education. The unique money-saving aspect of my bill is that it uses the existing public-school infrastructure and trained teachers to make early childhood education available to all, saving billions of dollars for its implementation.

The success of Head Start and other pre-kindergarten programs, combined with new scientific evidence concerning the importance of brain development in early childhood, virtually mandate the expansion of early childhood education to all children today. Early learning programs have been available only to the affluent, who can afford them, and to some low-income families in programs such as Head Start, which would be unaffected by my bill. My bill provides a practical way to universal, public preschool education for the majority of families. The goal of the bill is to afford the benefits of early childhood education

to the American working poor, lower-middle-class and middle-class families, most of whom have been left out of this essential education for their children.

We cannot afford to allow the most fertile years for childhood development to pass unenriched. My bill responds both to the great needs of parents who seek early childhood education, as well as to today's brain science, which shows that a child's brain development begins much earlier than had been previously understood.

Considering the staggering cost of day care, the inaccessibility of early childhood education and the opportunity that early education offers to improve a child's chances of success, schooling for three- and four-year-olds is overdue. The absence of viable options for working families demands our immediate attention.

My bill reflects what jurisdictions throughout the nation increasingly are trying to accomplish. The District of Columbia, for example, has achieved an extensive integration of early childhood education as part of a larger effort to improve D.C. public schools. A recent report highlighted the economic benefits of early childhood education, emphasizing its role in expanding job opportunities and decreasing the amount of money spent on programs to address teen pregnancy and crime.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

CELEBRATING THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TORPEDO FACTORY ART CENTER

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 27, 2019

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating the 45th anniversary of the Torpedo Factory Art Center in Alexandria, Virginia. The arts are very important to the Eighth District of Virginia, and play a crucial role in our economic growth, community development, and educational opportunities.

The U.S. Naval Torpedo Station in Alexandria opened a century ago and has served many unique roles in its lifetime. During World War II it was used as a munitions plant before being turned into a storage facility. In 1969, the City of Alexandria bought the building for use by its residents.

The President of The Art League of Alexandria, Marian Van Landingham, proposed converting the space into art studios in 1974. Today, 45 years later, the Torpedo Factory Art Center continues to be a thriving creative community in the City of Alexandria. The center hosts over 500,000 visitors every year and is the nation's largest collection of working-artists' open studios under one roof. It is a significant part of the City of Alexandria's history and, I hope, its future.

Madam Speaker, for these reasons I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the Torpedo Factory Art Center on reaching this milestone anniversary, and in thanking all those who have contributed their time and talent to the Torpedo Factory Art Center.

RECOGNIZING BEVERLY LEE OF LOS ANGELES

HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 27, 2019

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the accomplishments of Beverly Lee in 40 years of service to the Los Angeles Communications Center, or LACC.

A Public Safety Operator at LACC is responsible for answering any and all 911, public information, and allied agency calls in the 88 cities within Los Angeles County. LACC is the largest dispatch center in the state and Los Angeles County and answers an average of 7,000 calls a day, and over 10,000 calls a day during holidays, special events, or catastrophes.

Beverly Lee's journey at LACC began on July 23, 1979. Her younger brother was a dispatcher at LACC, and he encouraged Beverly to apply and test for a position. Beverly worked hard during her training and passed probation; the rest is history.

Beverly's career is historic in many ways. She was part of the last training class to document critical information on cards and the first to learn the computer-aided dispatch system. Throughout her 40-year career, she has handled innumerable high-priority emergency calls proficiently and calmly, being the voice of help in many hopeless moments. She was an integral part of rendering safety, service, and security to the public during the 1984 Olympics, 1991 LA Riots, 1994 Northridge Earthquake, 2000 Democratic National Convention, Y2K computer changeover, numerous LA Lakers Championships, the LA Kings 1st Championship, and many other notable emergencies. She has spent an untold number of holidays away from family and friends to assist others that need her help.

Beverly has an excellent work ethic and displays it daily. She physically, mentally, and emotionally exceeds her job expectations and does it with a smile. She is a strong and dedicated supporter of LACC's training program, and her guidance has led to many supervisorial and managerial promotions. She has donated food, clothing, and monetary gifts to the homeless and to Hurricane Katrina Victims, and is an active member of "Team CHP", supporting the Revlon Breast Cancer Walks and CHIPS for Kids. Her infectious laugh contributes to the morale of LACC, and her willingness to go above and beyond is truly an inspiration.

Beverly never imagined having a 40-year career at LACC, but has maintained her goal of having an excellent work ethic and a grateful attitude. She says the most rewarding gift of working at LACC has been the friendship, loyalty and support she has experienced here. Beverly's health and attitude are an example to us all.

TRIBUTE TO AGUSTIN SILVAS
"GUS" CHAVEZ

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 27, 2019

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Agustin Silvas "Gus"

Chavez, who passed away surrounded by friends and family on August 18th. He was 76 years old.

Agustin, affectionately known as Gus, was an exemplary community leader and activist who worked tirelessly for the Latino community in San Diego, California. He advocated for the importance of education as the most effective way to achieve economic success and self-sustainability.

Born in Texas, Gus arrived in San Diego in 1963 after joining the United States Navy, where he served as a Hospital Corpsman at Balboa Naval Hospital. It was during Gus's time in the Navy that he first began to work within the San Diego community and found his passion for activism through education and social justice work.

After he was honorably discharged from the Navy in 1966, Gus earned his Associate of Arts degree from San Diego City College and later his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from San Diego State University. Throughout his education, Gus worked with several student associations to fight for equal access to education. His work led to the founding charter of the Latino student group Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA), as well as the Brown Berets and MAPA.

In 1969, Gus co-founded the Chicano Federation of San Diego, a group dedicated to improving the lives of people in the Mexican American community in San Diego. The Chicano Federation started as a way to provide valuable resources and services to the Latino community. Today the organization offers child care programs, nutrition assistance programs, and affordable housing for families and seniors across all underserved communities in San Diego.

Gus served as the Director of the Educational Opportunity Program at San Diego State University for 30 years. Throughout his tenure, Gus took personal interest in students. He constantly motivated them to reach new heights and celebrated their accomplishments. I loved his sense of passion and excitement at the success of his students. I always felt a kindred spirit with Gus and his enthusiasm for lifting every student he worked with to their full potential.

Gus never stopped advocating for educational equity and educational access for all, particularly on behalf of first-generation students from marginalized communities. He firmly believed in the value of service and mentorship, and instilled that same sense of purpose into countless students.

I send my deepest condolences to his family and friends. I take comfort in knowing that Gus leaves behind a legacy of service and empowerment.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF NANCY PARKER

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 27, 2019

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Mrs. Nancy Parker, an author, breast cancer advocate, dedicated community leader, and award-winning journalist at WVUE FOX 8 News. After bringing the news to South Louisiana for nearly 25 years, Mrs. Parker passed away on Friday, August 16, 2019 at the age of 53.