

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE YEMEN AMERICAN BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

**HON. DEBBIE DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Yemen American Benevolent Association. Its meaningful work in Michigan is worthy of commendation.

Established in 1969, the Yemen American Benevolent Association (YABA) was created to support targeted communities. YABA endeavored to strengthen families, grow a sustainable regional economy, promote environmental protections, cultivate leadership, and encourage mutual respect for all. Since its inception, YABA has been dedicated to its mission and offers services like immigration assistance, Arabic language classes, fax services, and tutoring, to name a few, to achieve its goals. The association's efforts truly make a difference and positively impact the communities it serves.

The Yemen American Benevolent Association has been a valued part of our Michigan community for half a century. Although YABA's dedicated work continues to uplift targeted communities across Michigan, the association especially supports Dearborn and addresses the community's changing needs. Through its efforts to create links between people and the services they require, YABA has helped the Yemeni-Arab-American community in Dearborn thrive. YABA's wide range services prove to be an indispensable resource for many, and I deeply appreciate the association's tremendous work in our community.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 50th anniversary of the Yemen American Benevolent Association. For half a century, YABA has been an essential part of our Yemeni-American community. We are grateful for its impact and wish it continued success ahead.

**HONORING THE LIFE OF COLORADO SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE RUBEN VALDEZ**

**HON. JOE NEGUSE**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today I stand with the State of Colorado in mourning the loss of an historic and iconic public servant—Colorado Speaker of the House Ruben Valdez.

Born in Trinidad, Colorado, Speaker Valdez left school at the age of 15 to find work and support his mother and family. He later received his high school diploma through a GED program and used this experience to motivate his passion for expanding education opportunities to all Coloradans.

Early in his career, Speaker Valdez joined the United Steelworkers of America and rose through the union ranks. He eventually became the President of Steelworkers Local

5099 in Denver where he fought alongside his fellow union members for countless protections for workers throughout Colorado and the United States.

Speaker Valdez was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives in 1970, representing west and southwest Denver. In 1975, he became House speaker, Colorado's first Latino Speaker. Throughout his time in the State Legislature, Speaker Valdez was a strong advocate for workers, consumer protections and equity in education.

Speaker Valdez's involvement in politics remained constant throughout his life, even following his historic Speakership. Amongst many accomplishments, he served as a Regional Director of the U.S. Department of Transportation under President Jimmy Carter and worked as Executive Director of Colorado's Department of Social Services and Department of Labor and Employment. In his later years, he worked alongside his granddaughter as a lobbyist in the State Capitol, continuously pushing the legislative body toward justice and equity.

Throughout his many years of service, Speaker Valdez created a legacy of which his family, friends, and supporters should be so proud. It is a legacy that will no doubt continue to influence lawmakers and Coloradans alike, for generations to come.

For me, Speaker Valdez was a personal hero whose commitment to our state and to justice in our legislative process we can only hope to emulate. I join my Colorado community in mourning the loss of this thoughtful and empathetic leader, and send my deepest condolences to his entire family.

**HONORING THE LEGACY OF DR. ROSA SLADE GRAGG**

**HON. RASHIDA TLAIB**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of Dr. Rosa Slade Gragg, a woman who represented and championed the civil rights of Black women of the City of Detroit.

Dr. Rosa Slade Gragg worked as an English teacher before she became involved with civil rights advocacy. She quickly became an outstanding advocate for the advancement of Black women's rights. She was eventually appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to serve on the Board of the National Volunteer's Participation Committee of Civil Defense. Dr. Gragg also worked alongside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as an active and vocal champion of the civil rights movement. In addition to her advocacy, Dr. Gragg founded the Slade-Gragg Academy of Practical Arts in 1947, the first Black vocational school in Detroit. More than two thousand women and returning veterans were trained at the academy, the first Black owned and operated business on Woodward Avenue in Detroit. Over the years, Dr. Gragg accumulated a number of honors and recognition for her work to advance civil rights and served as an advisor to three United States Presidents.

We owe a debt of gratitude for the hard work and dedication of Dr. Rosa Slade Gragg. It is with great honor that I ask my colleagues

to join with me in honor of her memory and upon the dedication of a street named to acknowledge her civil rights activism.

**IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MOUNT MORIAH BAPTIST CHURCH**

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I join the community of Mount Moriah Baptist Church in the Cliffwood section of Aberdeen, New Jersey in recognizing the 100th anniversary of the church. Through its long history, Mount Moriah Baptist Church has provided a spiritual center for prayer and fellowship to the community.

The church property was purchased from Gelhaus White and Charles H. White in 1914 and deeded in 1919. While the church members worked on raising money to erect the building, they held services in each other's homes. The church, originally named Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church, was led at the time by Reverend J.W. Coakly and five additional trustees, T.M. Lester, Joseph Boles, Bearl Smith, Fred Coakly and Edward D. Causy.

Today, Mount Moriah Baptist Church remains a close-knit congregation. Its 60 members are led by Pastor Eddie Aikens and board members Deacon Marvin Fisher, Trustee Deputy Maor Robert Swindle, Financial Secretary Van Lane and Treasurer Betty Duncan. Throughout its long history, the church's spiritual leaders, Board of Trustees, staff and members have endeavored to carry on its mission of faith and service.

Madam Speaker, once again, it is my great honor to pay tribute to Mount Moriah Baptist Church as it celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. This incredible milestone is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

**RECOGNIZING THE CENTENNIAL OF VERO BEACH**

**HON. BILL POSEY**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, October 2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of Vero Beach, an iconic and vibrant seaside town full of rich history and culture in my district that I am proud to celebrate. Known locally as the "Hidden Jewel of the Treasure Coast", Vero Beach continues to showcase the unique wildlife, scenic coasts, thriving local businesses and the hardworking people of Florida.

First settled in the 1800's, Vero Beach's original pioneers paved the way for the prosperity the city enjoys today. One of the most notable early settlers, Henry T. Gifford, owned and operated a citrus grove business in addition to establishing the area's first mercantile store that doubled as a post office, express office and railroad ticket office. The story of how the town got its name "Vero" is often attributed to his wife Sarah who suggested the settlement be named the Latin word for "to speak the truth."

The Giffords' entrepreneurial spirit lived on, then leading Vero to experience significant growth and expansion in the following decades. In 1893, Henry Flagler's Florida East Coast Railroad (FEC) began service through Indian River County, serving as a turning point for the growing settlement that led to the Indian River Farms Company's launch of an extensive land reclamation project. This included a vision for a town that would become "one of the finest in Florida." The final plans for the "Town of Vero" were adopted in 1913. In 1925, following Vero's incorporation into the City Beautiful Campaign, the town's most prominent members lobbied the Florida Legislature for the creation of a new county known as "Indian River." Vero was designated the county seat and was re-named Vero Beach.

Just recently, the city officials of Vero Beach gathered in recognition of the Centennial with an official proclamation. The Mayor of Vero Beach, Val Zudans says of the milestone, "There is no better small town in America to live, retire, visit, raise children, or start a business. At 100 we are proud of our heritage, culture, and freedom. We eagerly await the next 100 years of making Vero more Vero."

In 2018, Vero was named one of the "Top Ten Happiest Seaside Towns in America" by Coastal Living Magazine, and it continues to stand as a beautiful and lively backdrop for families looking for a place to settle and for veterans seeking retirement. Its residents led by the Vero Beach Centennial Committee, intend to celebrate the 100 years with a month-long celebration of the community that includes a historic slide show and video presentation, live music, and a parade by Vero Beach High School.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Centennial of Vero Beach. Here's to 100 more years of memories and community.

#### RECOGNIZING MAYOR ARTHUR HOLK ON HIS 94TH BIRTHDAY

##### HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mr. BYRNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mayor Arthur Holk upon his 94th birthday.

Arthur has a decorated career as a public servant that began in 1952.

Arthur served as the mayor of Foley from 1976 to 1996 after serving on the Foley City Council for 24 years.

While Mayor, Arthur was elected President of the Alabama League of Municipalities, President of the Alabama League of Municipal Insurance Corporation, and Chairman of the State of Alabama Aeronautics Commission. Outside of office, he remained an engaged leader in his community.

During Arthur's long tenure in public office, Alabama incredibly had nine different governors.

Outside of public office, Arthur served his hometown as an insurance agent for over 60 years with State Farm Insurance and Baldwin Mutual Insurance.

Arthur is a 1949 graduate of Auburn University. He and his late wife, Fannie Jo, had two children, Frances and Andy. Their children and grandchildren have continued Arthur's leg-

acy of community service and civic involvement.

I congratulate Mayor Holk, on his 94th birthday, and thank Kim for all he has done for Southwest Alabama.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF MICHAEL ANTHONY OVIEDO

##### HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the life-giving choice made by Mike Oviedo.

In August, Mike, a lively, jovial 21-year-old from Katy, Texas passed away suddenly from an asthma attack.

A child of a military family, Mike embodied the value of service and worked hard to make others happy. He enjoyed spending time with his family and friends and was a hard worker who took immense pride in his job at Gorman Uniform.

Mike continued exemplifying the value of service even in death by making the magnanimous decision to donate his organs.

Organ donors are some of the most selfless and honorable people, giving up their own bodies after dying to ensure that others can live happier, healthier and longer lives. People like Mike demonstrate what it truly means to give.

Mike's memory will forever live on in the hearts and minds of his family, friends and community. And now, his big heart will continue to beat on, imparting onto someone the greatest gift of all: life.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, I would like to commemorate Mike's memory, his selfless gift and the wonderful legacy he has left to his family and our community.

#### FIRE OPERATIONS CHIEF MARK BURNS OF MEDFORD FIRE & RESCUE

##### HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mr. WALDEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Fire Operations Chief Mark Burns of Medford Fire & Rescue.

Mark James Burns was born on June 18, 1953 in Medford, Oregon, located in the Rogue Valley where he resided and worked the rest of his life. Mark's desire to help others surfaced at an age when he became a volunteer firefighter as a 16-year-old.

In 1971, just months after graduation from Crater High School in Central Point, Mark accepted a full-time firefighter position with Jackson County Fire District 3 and worked there for the next 10 years. His hard work, determination, wisdom, sense of humor, and his ability to inspire others garnered him the respect of his peers and supervisors—who quickly promoted him to Fire Engineer and then to Fire Captain.

Throughout his fire & rescue career, Mark consistently focused on his professional devel-

opment so he could be the best leader for his fellow firefighters and his community. He worked vigorously to advance his working skills and knowledge: completing the four-year Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy in Maryland, earning his Fire Science Technology degree at Rogue Community College, his Certificate in Fire Services Administration at Western Oregon University, and several certifications from the Department of Public Standards and Training.

In his leadership roles, Mark always led by example and played a significant role in grooming Rogue Valley's next generation of fire & rescue leaders. In fact, he became a mentor to many outside his own department while off-duty, teaching Fire Science in the classroom at Rogue Community College and serving as the campus Fire Science Program Coordinator.

In 1982, Mark left Jackson County Fire District 3 to serve as a Shift Battalion Chief for Medford Fire-Rescue, and in 1990 he became their Training Chief. By 1991, Mark was promoted to Operations Chief and, for the next 20 years, was responsible for all fire and rescue emergency response within Medford city limits. During this time, Mark led the Oregon State Fire Marshal Region 8 Hazardous Materials Response Team and the City of Medford Emergency Management Team, and he served on the Oregon Department of Forestry's statewide Incident Management Team.

Mark lived a life of selfless service as a firefighter and first responder protecting and saving the lives and property of southern Oregonians. Unfortunately, while battling the Oak Knoll Fire in Ashland on August 24, 2010, Mark experienced intense smoke inhalation and was medically retired in 2011 after 40 years of service. This incident caused Mark to develop an aggravating lung condition that he struggled with for the next five years, ultimately leading to his death. Chief Burns succumbed to his fire-related illness on March 6, 2016 at the age of 62.

Over the weekend, on October 6, 2019, Mark was one of the 119 fallen firefighters honored at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service in Emmitsburg, MD.

Mark is survived by his wife of 45 years, Darcy, his son, Trevis, his daughter, Karlie, and his eight grandchildren, Kristyn, Eryn, Zachary, Kayla, Payshens, Braylon, Brittny and Casey. Mark is also survived by his mother, Sally Burns, his sister, Patty Moser, his brother, John Burns, and his three nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his father, Jack Burns.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me and Mark's family in honoring the life, service, and sacrifice of Battalion Chief Mark Burns. May his dedication to Oregonians, our community, and his leadership among the fire & rescue community be long remembered and honored.

#### RECOGNIZING HELEN KEATING DILLON FOR HER RETIREMENT AS CAPTAIN OF THE IROONTON FERRY

##### HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 11, 2019*

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, it's my honor to recognize Helen Keating Dillon for