

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN H. RUTHERFORD

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained during the second vote series on May 15, 2019. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea on Roll Call No. 209.

OBESITY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, the Obesity epidemic is a long-standing issue in American society with two-thirds of our population being affected by excess weight. This nation is facing the consequences of limited policies and funding to resolve this public health issue. Obesity affects all populations but some groups are disproportionately impacted such as racial and ethnic minorities. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, African American women have the highest rates of being overweight or obese with about 4 out of 5 women fitting the description. Constituents in my district are also highly affected by this phenomenon. A National Health and Nutrition Examination survey revealed that in the North Lawndale community in Chicago 46.4 percent of children aged 2–12 were considered obese. This is unacceptable especially when compared to the national average of childhood obesity which is 18.5 percent. Therefore, we must examine the factors that lead to such disparities. One primary factor in my district that contributes to this issue are food deserts. The lack of access to healthy food options is due to both the lack of food retail businesses and income within these communities. Unfortunately, high-calorie foods are less expensive and more available in neighborhoods with more corner stores than supermarkets. Additionally, there is a lack of safe, accessible places to walk, bike, and play in low-income neighborhoods, leaving residents with very few options. Health policies and programs need to be promoted in every sector from schools to local businesses to grassroots organizations. Addressing this epidemic will require us to work together to garner resources to battle obesity at the federal, state, and community levels. These resources could help communities facing health disparities fund projects such as community gardens and rebuilding playgrounds to get them on a path to healthier living. It is imperative that we address the issue of obesity to ensure the health of the country.

IN RECOGNITION OF IRENE SCHAFER

HON. KELLY ARMSTRONG

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding constituent, a

friend, and a truly remarkable woman, Irene Schafer.

May 16 is Irene's 89th birthday, and I can attest that those 89 years have been spent tirelessly serving those around her. Service to her community is who Irene is.

Irene is active with many civic and leadership groups in Dickinson, including the Dickinson Area Builders Association, Badlands Board of Realtors, Dickinson Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation's Charity Ball Committee, Dickinson State University Alumni Association's Yuletyme Committee, AAUW, United Way, Elks Lodge, District 36 GOP, as well as a member of the Post Office Consumer Advisory Committee.

Even so, Irene was not satisfied with her level of community service. In 2016, Irene founded a new group, the Power of 100 Women, to gather women four times per year to each donate \$100 to a deserving nonprofit organization.

The Power of 100 Women donated more than \$15,000 to help open Hope's Landing, a sober-living home in Dickinson for women suffering from addiction. The group donated \$10,000 to the Dickinson Backpack Program to purchase 2,000 backpacks for schoolchildren in need. Most recently, the group donated \$20,000 to Project H.E.R.O. (Helping Educators Reach Out), a non-profit organization ensuring that children are eating lunch every day. Since its founding, the organization's members have donated over \$240,000 to community-serving organizations.

Irene's mission in life is to build a great community and she is doing that every day through her community service.

My warmest greetings to Irene on her 89th birthday. Blessings to her and her family on this special occasion.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GREG PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, May 15, 2019 I was honored to attend the Memorial Service for Senator Richard Lugar at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. Senator Lugar will be remembered as one of America's greatest Senators, leaving his mark on domestic and global affairs throughout his six terms. For the above reason, I was not recorded for roll call vote 205, 206, 207, 208, and 209. Had I been present, I would have voted Nay on roll call 205, 206, 207, and 208, and Yea on roll call 209.

INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION HONORING RETIRED HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JOHN CONYERS, JR. ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this resolution honoring

retired Congressman John Conyers on the occasion of his 90th Birthday. Congressman Conyers was born in Highland Park, Michigan, on May 16, 1929, and grew up in the city of Detroit. Like many men of his generation, he served in the military and was stationed in Korea, during the Korean War, as an officer in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, where he was awarded combat and merit citations.

Following the completion of his military service, he earned both his B.A. (1957) and LL.B. (1958) degrees from Wayne State University and became an active member of the Michigan Bar. He had the distinction of working on the staff of Congressman John Dingell, serving as counsel to Detroit-area labor union locals and as a referee for Michigan's workers' compensation department.

His commitment to civil rights was forged during the great movement of the 1960's, when traveling throughout the South, and was in Selma, Alabama, for the Freedom Day voter registration drive in 1963. In correspondence, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., would later remark that Conyers presence in Selma, Alabama "had an electric effect on the voteless and beleaguered Negro citizens of this city, state and nation."

Conyers legislative career began in 1964 when he ran for an open seat in Michigan's 1st District, following the landmark 1964 Baker v. Carr decision, and defeated his opponent with 84 percent of the vote. In this race, Congressman Conyers received the only known political endorsement from Dr. King and Rosa Parks, known for her prominent role in the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott, moved to Detroit and served on Conyers' staff between 1965 and 1988.

Congressman Conyers went on to serve 26 terms, winning re-election twenty-five times, and is the third longest-serving member of the House in history, and the sixth longest-serving member of Congress in history. He was one of the 13 members who founded the Congressional Black Caucus in 1969 and was considered the Dean of the Caucus during his tenure.

As a freshman member, Congressman Conyers won a seat on the Judiciary Committee and went on to serve as Chairman of that committee from 2007 to 2011, along with serving as the ranking Democratic member on the Committee from 1995 to 2007 and again from 2011 to 2017. During his tenure, he successfully worked to oppose initiatives that violated Constitutional values and served as a beacon of hope to those facing poverty and injustice. He was the first member to introduce legislation or hold hearings on an important series of civil rights issues, including: police misconduct; LGBTQ protections; violence against the Arab and Muslim American communities; AIDS in the African-American community; environmental racism; and restorative justice, just to name a few.

Over the course of his legislative career, Congressman Conyers was responsible for more than 100 bills, amendments, and resolutions being enacted, including 57 on which he was the overall lead sponsor, and an additional 56 that he managed or was the lead Democratic sponsor. From his position on the Judiciary Committee, he led many of our most notable legislative efforts on civil rights and civil liberties, including: the Martin Luther King Holiday Act, the Voting Rights Act Reauthorizations, the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorizations, the Hate Crimes Prevention

Act, Pattern and Practice Enforcement Act, the USA Freedom Act, the Fair Sentencing Act, the “Motor Voter” Act, and the Innocence Protection Act.

For these reasons, Congressman Conyers is recognized as a champion of civil rights and civil liberties, receiving numerous honors, including the NAACP Spingarn Medal and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Hubert H. Humphrey Award. Always a leader and gentleman, Congressman Conyers walked the halls of this institution for more than 50 years, leaving a lasting impact through his dedication to freedom and justice for all people.

Like so many in this body, I am proud to have been his colleague and friend. The celebration of his 90th birthday is an ideal time to reflect on his accomplishments and celebrate his distinguished legislative career. His dedica-

tion and commitment to service is an example for us all. He will always be the Chairman.

THE EQUALITY ACT

HON. SYLVIA R. GARCIA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong and steadfast support of the Equality Act.

We've made a lot of progress in recent years, but the reality is that many still face discrimination because of who they are and the people they love.

In Texas, the discrimination and inequality faced by the LGBTQ community is heart-

breaking and entirely un-American, but with the Equality Act we can do something about it.

The Equality Act will greatly extend civil rights for the LGBTQ community, providing consistent and explicit protections from discrimination for LGBTQ people across key areas of life including employment, housing, credit, and education.

In Texas, that means having explicit protections for LGBTQ people for the first time in our history. Updating federal law will tear down barriers to prosperity and lead to better outcomes for our family members, neighbors, and loved-ones.

This is long overdue for nearly 1 million LGBTQ Texans and is why I urge all of my colleagues to make the Equality Act the law of the land.