

American people. After over 40 years of dedicated service, Ms. Schneider is retiring.

When I was first elected to Congress, Ms. Schneider was my most valuable resources for learning how this institution functions. She helped me understand parliamentary procedure, and even took the time to role play scenarios with me so I could best serve my constituents. When Democrats lost the Majority in 1994, Ms. Schneider gave me all the tools I needed to tackle being in the Minority.

Over her storied career, she has honed a singular knowledge of the legislative and political process and has shared this insight for the benefit of the institution and the young people who came to this city to make opportunity real for their communities and their country. It is thanks to Ms. Schneider that many of my colleagues in Congress are able to serve their constituents every day. She taught me everything I know about the steering process, a key part of Congress' work. I still use the knowledge Ms. Schneider shared with me every day.

As well as helping to guide Members of Congress and their staff through the procedures of this institution, she has helped countless young professionals through her Direct Connect to Congress classes. Ms. Schneider leaves behind a legacy of hard work and dedication to mentoring other professionals dedicated to civil service that will live on in the Women in Government Relations Judy Schneider Fellowship program.

One of my personal heroes, Shirley Chisholm, said “service is the rent we pay for the privilege of living on this earth.” Ms. Schneider has certainly paid her rent. The Congress is a place long in history and deep with complexity. It can be a labyrinth where passionate individuals dedicated to service become separated from their original aspirations. It has been Judy who has, again and again, helped others navigate the path to change. I congratulate her on 40 years of service and I thank her for impacting the lives of hundreds of young people, staff and members.

It is my honor and privilege today to recognize Ms. Judy Schneider for her hard work and dedication, and to wish her the best of luck in her new retirement. She will be greatly missed.

HONORING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2019

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring awareness to the anniversary of the passage of the American Disabilities Act, which was signed into law on July 26, 1990.

The passage and signing of the Act represent the culmination of many years of hard work and advocacy by countless differently abled individuals, their families, and allies. It is unbelievable that until only thirty-nine years ago, there were no laws in place to protect the civil rights of some of our communities' most vulnerable populations. The American Disabilities Act provides important protections in workplaces, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to those who toiled to bring awareness and visibility to the people who were once discluded or segregated from public life, due to physical barriers or due to the stigma of misconception. We still have a long way to go to ensure equity for the differently abled, but we can support and acknowledge the organizations that are advocating, educating, and protecting.

I therefore rise today to mark the anniversary of the American Disabilities Act.

VENEZUELA TPS ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 23, 2019

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 549, “The Venezuela TPS Act of 2019.”

The bill would designate Venezuela for temporary protected status (TPS), allowing certain Venezuelan nationals to stay in the U.S., regardless of their current immigration status.

The Secretary of Homeland Security grants TPS to certain individuals who cannot safely return to their home countries due to ongoing armed conflict, environmental disasters, or other extraordinary circumstances.

While the total number of individuals, who would be eligible for TPS under this bill, is unclear, about 72,000 Venezuelans have come to the U.S. since 2014.

The Venezuela TPS Act of 2019 would:

Designate Venezuela for TPS, allowing its nationals to remain in the U.S. for 18 months, regardless of their immigration status if they:

Have been continuously physically present in the United States since the date of the enactment of the bill; and

Meet all other requirements for TPS.

Provide Venezuelan nationals who meet the above requirements with:

Employment authorization; and

Authorization to travel outside the U.S. for emergencies and extenuating circumstances.

Direct the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security to work with international partners to increase capacity of countries surrounding Venezuela to provide migration services and asylum, specifically to establish and expand in-country reception centers and shelters and improve migration and asylum registration systems.

Congress should designate Venezuela for TPS because:

The country has been facing unprecedented economic, humanitarian, security, and refugee crisis, consisting of extreme food and medicine shortages, severe infant and child malnutrition, rampant crime, and government-sponsored repression.

Venezuela ranks as the most dangerous country in the world.

In 2017, the country's homicide rate stood at 89 per 100,000 people which compares to 5.3 per 100,000 people in the United States.

TPS holders contribute to the U.S. economy.

For example, TPS holders from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti contribute \$4.5 billion in income to the gross domestic product annually and \$6.9 billion to Social Security and Medicare over a decade.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 549 to allow certain Venezuelan nationals to stay in the U.S., regardless of their current immigration status.

CONGRATULATING THE GUAM TERRITORIAL BAND

HON. MICHAEL F. Q. SAN NICOLAS

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2019

Mr. SAN NICOLAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Guam Territorial Band for taking home a Gold Award in the 2019 Australian International Music Festival held in Sydney, Australia.

The Guam Territorial Band was organized in 1976 as the Governor's Youth Band to perform for the inauguration of President Jimmy Carter in 1977. The band continues its service to the people of Guam as the Official Band of Guam by performing at graduations, military events, national holiday ceremonies, official visits, village fiestas, local government functions, and numerous venues in Guam, the United States, and abroad. The Guam Territorial Band is led by Chief Band Master Maximo Ronquillo, Jr., and the Regional Band Masters, Joanne Matanane Sosa and William Brandon Aydlett.

The Guam Territorial Band has educational programs for aspiring musicians to gain experience and training. The Guam Honor Band Program provides middle and high school students opportunities to develop their musical talents. For more advanced musicians, the Guam Band Academy offers in-depth training in music theory, marching band, solo performance, and small ensemble performance under the Chief Band Master.

In the 2019 Australian International Music Festival, the Guam Territorial Band was a Command Performance Band and received a Gold Award. The Australian International Music Festival is among the largest music festivals in the southern hemisphere, receiving participation from 62 ensembles and over 1,300 participants in 2019. The Guam Territorial Band has previously received numerous honors and awards, including being a Command Performance Band and received Gold Awards in the 2005 and 2014 Australian International Music Festivals, respectively.

On behalf of the people of Guam, I want to congratulate the Guam Territorial Band for their success in the 2019 Australian International Music Festival. They continue to demonstrate outstanding musicianship in Guam, the United States, and abroad.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOSEPH P. LEAHY

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2019

Mr. NEAL. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize my good friend Mr. Joe Leahy as he nears the end of his term as the 114th chairman of the nation's largest insurance association—the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America, also known as the Big “I”. He was appointed chairman of the Big “I” in August

2018, in my hometown of Springfield, MA, and over the past year has done a remarkable job of piloting the association. He has proven himself to be a strong and thoughtful leader for independent insurance agents across the country.

Joe graduated from Western New England College and is currently the President of Leahy & Brown Insurance & Realty, Inc., which he founded with his wife Frances in 1989. Joe has a fine record of public service as he previously served as Chief of Staff to Massachusetts State Senator Martin T. Reilly (D-Springfield).

At the state association level, Leahy was elected to the Executive Committee of the Massachusetts Association of Insurance Agents (MAIA) in 2001, served as chairman in 2005, and was Massachusetts director on the Big "I" national board from 2008 to 2013. In 2013, Leahy received the MAIA Henry F. Barry, Jr. Memorial Pacesetter Award, which is awarded to an agent who has contributed his or her talent, time and energy for the betterment of the agency system and is the highest honor that the MAIA bestows.

On the national association level, Joe has served on numerous Big "I" committees and task forces including the Big "I" Executive Committee, Government Affairs Committee, Tax Task Force, and the InsurPac Board of Trustees.

I would also like to recognize the aforementioned Frances Leahy, Joe's esteemed wife. Joe has been married to Frances for more than 30 years. Together they reside in Northampton, Massachusetts and have six children and eight grandchildren.

Once again, Madam Speaker, I am proud of Joe Leahy and all he has accomplished for Massachusetts and beyond. I wish him and Frances well in all their future endeavors, following his successful year as Chairman of the Big "I."

HONORING GARY GALLO

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2019

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Gary Gallo on the occasion of his retirement from the Garden City, Michigan Fire Department.

Gary Gallo has displayed true leadership, rising through the ranks of the Garden City Fire Department, before finally retiring as captain. After obtaining certification, Captain Gallo took on the role of Team Leader to the Western Wayne County Hazardous Incident Response Team in addition to his responsibilities. He has been a dependable and active member of the Fire Department. Captain Gallo's devotion is evident in his service to the community. Beyond his duties as a firefighter, he has served as a board member to of Garden City United Needy Family Fund as well as Union President and Treasurer of International Association of Fire Fighters Local 1911.

Please join me in saluting Captain Gary Gallo for his twenty-five years of bravery and service to the public as we wish him well on his retirement.

SAFE DRINKING WATER IN PLAYGROUNDS AND PARKS ACT

HON. GRACE MENG

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2019

Ms. MENG. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a call to action regarding the right to clean drinking water. Every person has a right to drink water without fear of being poisoned.

That is why, today, I am introducing the Safe Drinking Water in Playgrounds and Parks Act. This bill would ensure states, municipalities, and schools have the financial resources to replace drinking water fountains. While we can test water fountains for lead poisoning, some municipalities and schools lack the resources to replace its water fountains; this is simply wrong. My bill will ensure such entities have the necessary financial resources.

Children who play at playgrounds may be exposed to lead if they drink from the water fountain. This is deeply worrisome and no parent should have to worry that their child may be exposed to this deadly contaminant.

Exposure to lead—even low levels—can have serious health and development consequences for infants, children under six, and pregnant women. For those exposed to this dangerous element, signs of poisoning may include cognitive impairment, behavioral problems, and other health related problems. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, "there is no safe amount of lead exposure in children . . .," which is why it is critical that we advance efforts that prevents lead poisoning.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Safe Drinking Water in Playgrounds and Parks Act. It is undeniable that the fate of our children and future generations rests on the decisions we make today about fighting lead water pipes.

RECOGNIZING LISETTE MORTON AND HER SERVICE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 2019

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Congressional career of Lisette Morton, my long time Legislative Director and the Director of Policy, Planning, and Member Services of the House Judiciary Committee.

Lisette began her career on Capitol Hill nearly 20 years ago working on environmental issues for the late Congressman Bruce Vento. She started working as my Legislative Assistant in the year 2000 and became my Legislative Director in 2004.

Lisette has an encyclopedic understanding of a huge range of issues and always ensured that I was well prepared for hearings, mark-ups, and floor debates. She is a constant source of reliable and informed advice on which I have relied for almost two decades.

Throughout her tenure in my office, Lisette worked tirelessly to meet New York's unique transportation and infrastructure needs. She helped achieve a major legislative accomplish-

ment by securing \$100 million under the Projects of National Significance Title of the Transportation bill for the cross harbor rail freight tunnel. Securing this much money in a highway bill for a rail project was unprecedented. She also consistently ensured that passenger rail legislation protected resources for the Northeast Corridor, while preventing massive cuts to Amtrak. She ensured I had a seat on the Conference Committee that negotiated the 2015 FAST Act, which allowed me to bring an additional \$1.5 billion in highway and transit formula funding to New York. In 2016, she worked on the FAA extension and ensured that my legislation, the Families Flying Together Act, was included in the final bill.

Lisette has faced down many national crises as a member of my team. She worked for me on September 11, 2001, and was tireless in her efforts to get a proper detoxification and cleanup after the attack in New York and to hold the EPA accountable. Without her fierce advocacy and dedication, there would be more 9/11 responders and survivors sick today. Her work laid the groundwork for everything that followed, including the establishment of a permanent World Trade Center Health Program and 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund. During the BP oil spill in 2010, Lisette worked tirelessly to get language I authored to ban the use of dispersants included in the Gulf Spill legislation that passed the House of Representatives. Finally, during Superstorm Sandy, Lisette worked closely with me and my staff to drive resources quickly to those who needed it in the aftermath of the storm. She worked around the clock with federal, state, and local officials to solve problems as they arose and pass supplemental funding legislation to build back our critical New York infrastructure and make it more resilient.

Lisette has always been an advocate for the arts, especially music, and protecting the rights of artists. Lisette played a critical role in my work on copyright issues with the Judiciary Committee. Lisette worked tremendously hard to pass the Music Modernization Act out of the Judiciary Committee and ultimately out of the House by a remarkable vote of 415-0. Passage of this bill was a major legislative achievement that took years to complete and would not have happened without her hard work and dedication to the effort.

Lisette played a critical role in helping to elect me to the position of Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee in 2017. She quickly established herself as the Director of Member Services and worked to make sure Members concerns are heard and that committee staff and Members are kept informed of Judiciary Committee business.

This year, when I became Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Lisette took on the new role of Director of Policy, Planning, and Member Services. She worked with our entire Judiciary team to create a bold legislative agenda, to ensure hearings were held on critical issues facing the country, and to pass meaningful legislation out of Committee and onto the floor of the House. With her help, the Judiciary Committee passed H.R. 1, the For the People Act; H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act; H.R. 1112, the Enhanced Background Checks Act; H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act; H.R. 1585, the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization; H.R. 5, the Equality Act; and H.R. 1327, the Permanent Reauthorization of the September