PASSING OF COURTNEY EVERTS MYKYTYN

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share a word about the untimely passing of Courtney Everts Mykytyn.

In 1954, the United States Supreme Court unanimously struck down lawful school segregation in the landmark case of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka. In a unanimous decision, the Court stated, ''where the state has undertaken to provide it, [education] is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.'' Chief Justice Earl Warren went on to state that ''in the field of public education, the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place.''

Courtney founded Integrated Schools in Los Angeles, California in 2015 to start a grassroots movement for school integration. Integrated Schools' mission states: ''America's schools are more segregated than before the Civil Rights Movement. . . . Through national organizing to promote local action, we support, educate, develop and mobilize families to ''live their values,'' disrupt segregation, and leverage their choices for the well-being and futures for their own children, for all children, and for our democracy.''

As champion for educational equity, Courtney recognized that school integration is one of the most powerful tools to ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to reach their full potential. She understood that the work of integrating our schools can be uncomfortable and complicated, and worked to educate parents and build community coalitions. Unlike many school integration efforts that place burden solely on families of color, Courtney's mission was also to challenge white families to integrate schools. Courtney was always intentional in her efforts as she boldly stated: ''We're [white people] the ones who kind of made it all [school integration] fail. Really fixing it has to be on us.''

Courtney educated white families about how true school integration requires both an understanding of systemic racism in America and the careful work of relationship-building free of self-interested agendas and without employing a white saviorism mentality. When I think of Courtney's leadership on this important issue, I am reminded of the Court's 1971 opinion in Swann v Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education led by Chief Justice Earl Warren. He stated, ''. . . [A]ll things are not equal in a system that has been deliberately constructed and maintained to enforce racial segregation. The remedy for such segregation may be administratively awkward, inconvenient, and even bizarre in some situations, and may impose burdens on some; but all awkwardness and inconvenience cannot be avoided . . .''

Courtney understood the consequences of segregation for children and our democracy. She often spoke about how segregation undermines our core American ideals of fairness and equality and worked tireless to help fulfill the promise of Brown. Courtney emphasized that integrating schools was not about sacrifice, but instead about a commitment to strengthening our democracy and building a better society. I hope advocates and families continue her legacy and commitment of fighting for school integration. Further, I challenge this body to honor Courtney's legacy in the months and years to come by taking the necessary actions to support and advance school integration.

Madam Speaker, the sadness of the passing of Courtney Everts Mykytyn is offset by her transformative work on school integration. Her death is a great loss to the school integration movement and our country. She will be greatly missed. I send my deepest sympathies to her loved ones, including her husband, Roman Mykytyn, her two children, Stefan and Lulu, and the Integrated Schools community.

HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 13, 2020

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, as a senior member of congress, I rise in support of H.R. 4302, the ''Homeless Assistance Act,'' which amends the United States Housing Act of 1937 by adding in a new subsection that creates a method for information of homeless individuals to be disclosed promptly from PHAs to local government and nonprofit organizations.

This subsection, subsection 'C', would authorize Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) to disclose relevant client information to local government entities and nonprofits in order to facilitate housing and services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

PHAs can play an important role in a local strategy to end homelessness, however PHAs are limited by the Federal Privacy Act.

PHAs can receive information on incoming homeless clients, but they must obtain written consent from each client before disclosing information about its client's housing assistance with local government entities and nonprofits, which can serve as an unnecessary barrier.

One of the challenges to serving people who are experiencing homelessness is coordinating between various local entities that are working together to provide the necessary housing and services that cater to the unique needs of each individual and family.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's '2019 Point-in-Time Homeless Count & Survey' collected data showing that as of April of 2019 there are 3,938 sheltered and unsheltered residents of Houston experiencing homelessness.

The most recent data from the city of Houston had revealed nearly 69,000 individuals had signed up for their waitlist to receive housing assistance.

The Houston Housing Authority (HHA) provides services to more than 60,000 low-income Houstonians, including over 17,000 families housed through the Housing Choice Voucher Program and another 5,500 living in 25 public housing and tax credit developments around the city.

The Homeless Assistance Act assures that the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of information about clients can be disclosed not for public consumption, but to other home and health services programs for the benefit of the client.

The implementation of subsection 'C' would allow PHAs to disclose relevant client data with local government entities and nonprofits for the limited purpose of facilitating the expedited identification, assessment, and linkage of individuals experiencing homelessness to housing and supportive services.

I urge all Members to join me in voting for H.R. 4302.