

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE WORK OF THE
VALLEY SYRIA RELIEF COM-
MITTEE**HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2021

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise in appreciation of the efforts of my constituents to educate their fellow Americans about the human consequences of more than a decade of horrendous armed conflict in Syria and to provide support to the Syrian people.

The crisis in Syria has faded from the headlines here in the U.S. But my constituents understand that democracy and justice, at home and abroad, depend on the commitment and participation of engaged American citizens. They have not given up, and neither must we.

Their efforts are well described in a column by Sara Weinberger of the Valley Syria Relief Committee, published on November 15 in the Daily Hampshire Gazette, and which I would like to include in the RECORD.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN SYRIA HITS HOME

(By Sara Weinberger)

"It was 11:15 a.m. on Sept. 30th. I was one of six heads on the Zoom screen. Michael Kane, Micky McKinley, Debbie Shriver and I stared in silence. The four of us comprised The Valley Syrian Relief Committee.

"Sharing the screen were two of Congressman Jim McGovern's staff. We had requested the meeting to give the congressman an update on the war in Syria, now in its 11th year, and to ask that he raise his voice in Congress to save Syrian lives.

"What we didn't know was that McGovern had spent the morning trying to pass a stop-gap bill on the last day of the fiscal year to prevent a government shutdown. Not a great day for our meeting, I thought, imagining a preoccupied McGovern politely listening to our presentation, while his mind was elsewhere. Apologizing for his late arrival, he left his morning crisis at the door, and for the next hour listened intently, asked questions, and showed us that the purpose of our visit genuinely mattered.

"In 2011, Syrians, inspired by our democratic form of government, demonstrated in defiance of the authoritarian regime of Syria's brutal dictator, Bashar Al Assad. They have been paying for it ever since with their lives and their livelihoods, with a whole generation of traumatized children who have lost loved ones, ran for refuge from barrel bombs, and tried to hold unto hope in a place that many have deemed a hell on earth. Yet, with our own country's democracy in peril, garnering interest in longstanding wars on the other side of the world can be a challenge.

"This was not the case in our own community, where several hundred of McGovern's constituents have faithfully demonstrated their commitment and concern for the welfare of Syrians since 2014. In September 2015, they filled the sanctuary of First Churches for our first big event, "Songs for Syria" to raise funds for the Syrian American Medical Society. We reminded McGovern of the hundreds who accepted our invitations to edu-

cate members of his district's interfaith organizations, who broke bread with us, shared soup, and bought copies of "The Soup for Syria" cookbook, produced by local publisher Michel Moushabeck.

"Folks from Franklin and Hampshire counties shipped a container filled with everything from diapers, to winter clothing, to shoes and boots to enable refugees and displaced people living in tents to survive the long Syrian winter. Actions led to more actions: groups gathered to write personal letters of hope to assure Syrian children and their families that they are not alone.

"Rebecca Leopold's students at Amherst Regional High School formed the Refugees in Distress Club, developing a curriculum to educate younger students about the situation in Syria. With the help of our partners at the Washington, D.C.-based Syrian Emergency Task Force, Mazen Al-Hamuda, spent a day at ARHS openly shared his traumatic story of the physical and emotional scars of brutal torture he endured in a Syrian prison.

"The above stories only scratch the surface of the many actions the residents of Congressional District 2 engaged in on behalf of the Syrian people. Their efforts allowed the Valley Syrian Relief Committee to raise more than \$200,000 for humanitarian assistance and bring internationally known experts to inform and engage people in efforts to make sure the people of Syria are not forgotten.

"Pivoting to Zoom in 2020, our supporters generously donated funds to purchase two school buses to serve as an evacuation vehicle when the bombs start falling, an ambulance to get medical help for injured children, and of course, to transport the young children to their beloved Wisdom House School.

"There was heartbreak too. The news of Mazen Al Hamouda's disappearance in Syria broke all of our hearts, especially those of the students who fell in love with the lanky man with dark shadows under his eyes. Mazen's legacy will live on with some of these students, who went on to college to major in human rights and international relations. They will be the future peacebuilders, replacing dictatorships with civil societies in Syria and beyond.

"McGovern has been an ally for the Syrian people. He has organized programs for his congressional colleagues and others through the Lantos Human Rights Commission, to showcase Syrian heroes such as Caesar, who smuggled thousands of photographs of brutalized bodies of imprisoned Syrians, to expose to the world the war crimes of the Assad regime. We were moved by the genuine feelings expressed at the end of our meeting, when McGovern reminding his colleagues in Congress that they must recommit to bringing about an end to the carnage.

"Our own country is on a precipice, with democracy hanging by a thread. Recently, I have become aware that what has happened in Syria could one day envelop our own country. Fascism is rearing its ugly head on every continent. Aligning ourselves to support those who are suffering can grow an international movement for human rights. It begins in communities like those in western Massachusetts, with those who actively uphold the humanity of our brothers and sisters, no matter where they live."

RECOGNIZING MIKE EPPS, COME-
DIAN, PRODUCER, AND ACTOR**HON. ANDRÉ CARSON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2021

Mr. CARSON. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Mike Epps, who will be filming his next Netflix comedy special in his hometown of Indianapolis and will also be inducted into the Madam Walker Legacy Center Walk of Fame on November 20, 2021.

Mike was born in Indianapolis to parents Mary Reed and Tommie Epps, and raised in our great city. Mike began performing comedy as a teenager. After achieving success in standup comedy, he moved to Atlanta, Georgia, to pursue a career in comedy at the Comedy Act Theater.

At 21 years old, Mike moved to New York City where he became a sensation in the underground Black comedy scene. Mike's career continued to prosper, performing in two HBO Def Comedy Jam broadcasts and appearing in the movie "Strays" in 1997 and the television series "The Sopranos" in 1999.

After New York, Mike's rise to fame took him to Los Angeles, where he landed a role in Ice Cube's movie "Next Friday." His acting career gained momentum, appearing in films such as "Dr. Dolittle 2," "All About the Benjamins" and "The Fighting Temptations," to name just a few.

Mike has used his platform to support our city and give back to others. In 2012, he served as the "Super Bowl Ambassador" to Indianapolis. In addition, his generous contributions to the Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation for the Arts in Georgia has helped provide opportunities for young people wishing to follow in his footsteps.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mike Epps. Our community is proud of his success and deeply grateful for his dedicated philanthropic and mentorship efforts, which are making a positive impact in the lives of countless young people across the country.

HONORING DR. DIETER MARTIN
GRUEN'S 99TH BIRTHDAY**HON. SEAN CASTEN**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2021

Mr. CASTEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Dr. Dieter Gruen's 99th birthday, honor his service and contributions to the scientific community, and record my continued support for his nomination for the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

For nearly eight decades, Dr. Gruen has worked to enhance American technology development as a former Manhattan Project Scientist and Argonne National Laboratory Distinguished Fellow. Born in 1922, Dr. Gruen is an

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

internationally esteemed German-American chemist, inventor, and innovator who immigrated to the U.S. from Nazi Germany in 1936. Throughout his career, Dr. Gruen has been driven by his curiosity and commitment to science—allowing him to make critical contributions to nuclear fission and fusion, solar energy, energy storage, and conservation. Specifically, Dr. Gruen has made several key technological advancements such as the nuclear submarine reactor cooling design and purification of uranium used to end World War II in the Pacific theater.

Through this work and countless other selfless endeavors, Dr. Gruen has been recognized by the international scientific community with numerous awards—including from Argonne National Laboratory, Northwestern University, and the Patent Law Association of Chicago—for his pioneering research in chemistry, physics, along with the emerging fields of materials and nanoscience. Dr. Gruen has been granted over 60 U.S. patents for his work in alternative energy and discoveries in interdisciplinary subjects. His lifelong contribution to science and alternative energy technology is exemplary and his work continues through today. Dr. Gruen's tireless efforts to solve future clean energy challenges presented by climate change is seldom exhibited by an individual. Humble and unpretentious, Dr. Gruen has and remains the embodiment of a dedicated American and pure scientist.

Dr. Gruen's story is the story of many immigrant Americans: those who left behind places of persecution, discrimination, and lack of opportunity for a brighter future. Those who arrived on our shores and helped build our nation through their hard-work, courageous spirit, unyielding dedication, and personal sacrifice. His courage and tenacity is an inspiration for us all.

Through the years, I have had the great pleasure of sitting down with Dr. Gruen, and learned from his countless stories about his work on the Manhattan Project, the nuts and bolts of nuclear fission technology, and his unique journey to the United States. At 99, Dr. Gruen still sees the world as a place of vast opportunities for technological innovation, a quality that I know encourages my own optimism to tackle issues facing our society.

For the reasons mentioned here and many more, I sincerely believe that Dr. Dieter Gruen should be awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his lifelong contributions to science and technology that continue today. Dr. Gruen's tireless efforts to solve future energy challenges is seldom exhibited by an individual. Humble and unpretentious, Dr. Gruen has and remains the embodiment of a dedicated American and pure scientist.

In April 2021, my colleagues Representatives BILL FOSTER, FRENCH HILL, JERRY MCNERNEY, and CHERI BUSTOS joined me in supporting Dr. Gruen's nomination for the highest civilian award in this country. Dr. Gruen has dedicated his life to science and made monumental contributions to shaping the United States as a leader and world power in technology, innovation, and national defense.

Congratulations to Dr. Gruen for his decades of accomplishments and exceptional contributions to science and the national security interests of the United States. I cannot think of a more deserving citizen for this award and today I wish him the happiest of birthdays.

RECOGNIZING MONGOLIA

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2021

Mr. BUCK. Madam Speaker, as a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I rise to highlight the importance of the strategic relationship between the United States and Mongolia.

Though geographically surrounded by two countries, Russia to the north and China to the south, I am told that Mongolia recognizes the United States as its "third neighbor"—a key partnership forged through diplomatic, military, cultural, and economic relationships that provide immense value to both nations.

As the United States continually adapts, analyzes, and innovates to stay ahead of challenges from global competitors like China and Russia, maintaining and strengthening relationships with regional allies like Mongolia is critical. Since establishing formal diplomatic relations in 1987, and the country's peaceful democratic revolution in 1990, the United States and Mongolia have partnered to expand political and financial cooperation and to advance market-based reforms to stabilize and grow economic opportunities for Mongolian citizens.

The U.S. State Department's 2021 Investment Climate Statement on Mongolia highlighted the importance of direct foreign investment, especially from western companies and institutions, as pivotal for the growth and stability of the Mongolian economy. Mongolia is making efforts to bolster investor confidence by reiterating its commitment to implementing the U.S.-Mongolia Agreement on Transparency in Matters Related to International Trade and Investment. This agreement provides greater regulatory certainty and transparency for domestic and foreign investors by requiring a public-comment period before new regulations become final.

The State Department's report highlights areas of success where investments have outperformed expectations, particularly in retail and service sectors of the economy. The report also identifies sectors where greater certainty is needed to ensure continued economic growth, including the mining and natural resources industries.

To quote from the report:

"The Oyu Tolgoi copper and gold mine has resurfaced as a bellwether of Mongolia's investment climate. Upon reaching full production, the mine may produce as much as 25 percent of Mongolia's GDP. Resolving an ongoing investment dispute related to the mine between the government and multi-national shareholders is seen by many investors as essential to improving Mongolia's investment climate image internationally." (2021 Investment Climate Statements: Mongolia, 2021)

A stable and robust Mongolian economy is central not only to the country's democratic, cultural, and financial independence, but it is also a clear strategic asset to the United States. I commend the Mongolian government for the steps it has taken to welcome and incentivize investment into its economy and encourage the government to continue to make progress on the institutional and legal measures that are needed to secure existing capital and encourage further investments into local jobs, businesses, and economic opportu-

nities for the Mongolian people. On behalf of the 4th Congressional District of Colorado, I am honored to recognize the important relationship between the United States and Mongolia.

HONORING ANTIBIOTIC AWARENESS WEEK

HON. A. DREW FERGUSON, IV

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2021

Mr. FERGUSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Antibiotic Awareness Week as we work to combat a looming public health and national security crisis that may one day be our next pandemic if left unaddressed: antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Applying the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic by investing in pandemic preparedness now will save lives later. That is why I am spearheading bipartisan, bicameral legislation, the Pioneering Antimicrobial Subscriptions to End Upsurging Resistance Act, also known as the PASTEUR Act.

Through a partnership between the federal government and industry, this bill encourages innovative drug development to target the most threatening infections, improves the appropriate use of antibiotics, and ensures domestic availability when needed.

Madam Speaker, as we tackle this next medical frontier, we must bring together the unique capabilities and resources of the public and private sectors to solve the market failures impeding the development of new lines of antibiotics.

The PASTEUR Act accomplishes this, and I'm encouraged our legislation is included in a groundbreaking package introduced this week—Cures 2.0 that builds on the 21st Century Cures Act of 2016—taking another important step toward addressing antimicrobial resistance.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF JAMES MERIMON PAINTER

HON. TED BUDD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 2021

Mr. BUDD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of James Merimon Painter, who passed away in Prospect Hill, North Carolina on October 23, 2021.

James Painter spent his entire life advocating for and serving the community he loved. From helping his parents on their farm during the Great Depression, to advising the Caswell Vocational Commission Services and the Caswell Civic Center Committees, Painter was one who truly put his community before himself.

James took his knowledge of farming with him to the United States Navy where he was selected to lead a farming unit on the Mariana Island of Tinian to feed American GIs in the Pacific. While serving, he sustained serious injuries from sniper fire; and on a separate occasion, his tractor ran over a land-mine. Following the incident, Mr. Painter jokingly said, "that was a waste of a perfectly good tractor."